

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the EPHESIANS

INTRODUCTION

1. Title. The early church was in almost universal agreement that this epistle was addressed to the church at Ephesus, and every known manuscript, without exception, bears the title “to the Ephesians.” However, the words *en Ephesō*, “at Ephesus,” in ch. 1:1 are lacking in Codex Vaticanus and in Codex Sinaiticus, two of the most ancient and authoritative manuscripts, as well as in the Chester Beatty MS P, a still earlier papyrus manuscript. Basil, of the 4th century, says (*Against Eunomius* ii. 19) that he had seen ancient manuscripts in which *en Ephesō* was omitted. Statements by Origen (*Commentary*) and Tertullian (*Against Marcion* v. 17) support this idea. It is clear, therefore, that there were some manuscripts of the 2d century in which the words in question were omitted. See Vol. V, pp. 181–183.

It is also significant that although Paul had spent three years in Ephesus in fruitful ministry, and no doubt had made many intimate friends, there are no personal greetings or salutations in this epistle. Rather, it deals with doctrines applicable to the universal church.

There are three solutions commonly offered for this problem:

- a. The letter was addressed to the church at Laodicea (see Col. 4:16).
- b. It was an encyclical to the churches in Asia.
- c. It was addressed to the Ephesians.

A combination of the second and third theories appears to satisfy the question. It may well be that the letter was sent to the church at Ephesus, the metropolis of the proconsulate of Asia, with the intention that it should be sent also to other churches in the area. This would account for the tradition that the church at Ephesus was addressed in the epistle, and also for the fact that very early there were extant copies of the book which did not contain the words *en Ephesō*, and which may have been copies of the original autograph that circulated among the neighboring churches. In any case, this letter doubtless was read by the believers in Ephesus, and probably by others also in the province of Asia.

2. Authorship. The Pauline authorship of Ephesians was never questioned until the last century, when many modern critical scholars arrived at the conclusion that it was not Pauline, or at least that it was only partially so. It was suggested that it was only a wordy repetition of Colossians, and that certain expressions indicate that the writer never was in Ephesus (Eph. 3:2, 3; 4:21). It was pointed out that there are no salutations to the members of the church at Ephesus, where Paul had labored for some three years (Acts 20:31). It was declared that the epistle is not Pauline in style, sentiment, or aim, and it was even proposed that no man in prison could write such a cheerful letter. For a discussion of these problems see Vol. V, pp. 181–183.

From the earliest times, when forgeries and apocryphal books were being separated from the genuine, the Epistle to the Ephesians was placed in the New Testament canon. The external evidence for its right to that status is overwhelming. It was known apparently to Clement of Rome (c. A.D. 90), and was also attested by Ignatius and Polycarp at the beginning of the 2d century. Paul is mentioned by name as the author in the Muratorian Fragment and later by Irenaeus. (c. A.D. 185), Clement of Alexandria (c.

A.D. 190–195), Tertullian (c. A.D. 207), and many other early writers. This commentary proceeds from the point of view that Paul was the author.

3. *Historical setting.* Having exercised his rights as a Roman citizen and appealed to Caesar, Paul was sent to Rome, where he probably arrived in the spring of A.D. 61. Here he was a prisoner for two years. Thus it is likely that this epistle was written about A.D. 62.

As a prisoner he apparently enjoyed certain liberties (cf. Eph. 6:19; Col. 4:3–11), which afforded him opportunity for reflection and writing. He took advantage of this to send to the churches in Asia much doctrinal and practical instruction. This letter would appear to have been written about the same time as Colossians and Philemon, for Tychicus was the bearer of Ephesians and Colossians, and a traveling companion of Onesimus, the bearer of Philemon (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7–9; Philemon 12; cf. AA 456). Ephesians, then, would be one of the four letters of the first imprisonment, Philippians also having been written during this period, probably the last of the four (see pp. 105, 106).

It has been suggested that Ephesians may have been written during the apostle's imprisonment in Caesarea, but the evidence for Rome is much stronger. That he was in prison at the time of writing there can be no doubt (chs. 3:1; 4:1), but the conditions of his confinement in Rome seem to have been more favorable to the writing of his letters (Acts 28:16, 20). While in the Roman prison he hoped for speedy liberation (Philemon 22), whereas there is no indication that he cherished any such hope while in Caesarea. Paul had long wished to visit Rome (Rom. 15:23, 24), and when there he planned to go to Colossae (Philemon 22). However, he never seems to have had the intention of going to Colossae from Caesarea.

Paul wrote this epistle in times and surroundings that well form a background to his message. The bloody Nero was emperor; licentiousness, luxury, and murder were rampant. It is recorded, for example, that when L. Pedanius Secundus, a senator of Rome, had been murdered by a slave, in accordance with legal rights some 400 slaves of his household were condemned to death in retribution. About the year of the writing of the epistle (A.D. 62), the revolt of Boadicea, or Boudicca, took place in Britain, when, it is said, "over 70,000" on the Roman side perished, along with many thousands of the rebels. In the midst of such confusion, and as a result of deep thought and inspiration, the apostle produced one of his noblest utterances concerning the faith that alone could restore to man peace and unity. It has been called "the Alps of the New Testament," and stands in the midst of peaks—Paul's nine epistles written to seven churches.

4. *Theme.* The subject of Ephesians is unity in Christ. He was writing to a church (or churches) consisting of Jews and Gentiles, Asiatics and Europeans, slaves and freemen—all symbols of a disrupted world that was to be restored to unity in Christ. This would necessitate unity of person, family, church, and race. The restoration of individual unity in the life of each believer assures the unity of God's universe. The theme of unity is implicit, where it is not explicit, throughout the book.

The apostle announces his theme in a tone of high spiritual exaltation, and urges upon all the highest character and conduct, for the purpose of unity not only in doctrine and organization but in Christ the head, and in the church, the mystical body of Christ. Although "in Christ" is the key phrase, it is difficult to select a key verse, for there is

scarcely a verse that does not present in one form or another the basic theme. Election, forgiveness, predestination, home relationships—all are “in Christ.”

The apostle has less to say about faith than about grace. In his earlier writings he stressed the relation of the individual to salvation; here he stresses the group, the church, the body, and he speaks of being “in Christ” rather than of things accomplished “through Christ”; of Christ living in the believer rather than of Christ crucified.

Paul does not develop his theme as a formal argument or proposition. He speaks simply of what came to him by revelation, not because of any superior intellect or insight, but because he was an instrument of God’s grace to whom had been granted a vision of the essential spiritual unity of the kingdom.

It may be asserted that what the books of Galatians and Romans were to the 16th century and the Protestant Reformation, Ephesians is to the church of today. What does Christianity have to say regarding the relations of the individual to the family, of the family to the nation, of the nation to the race, and of all to the church and to God? Paul answers by presenting Christ as the center and end of all things, working out His purposes through the church, gathering “together in one all things in Christ” (ch. 1:10).

There is no more urgent need today than that of a unity that preserves the freedom of the individual, unity without rigid uniformity. The apostle was granted a revelation that offers the only solution to a problem that haunts the minds of all good men.

5. Outline.

- I. Salutation, 1:1, 2.
- II. The Doctrinal Section, 1:3 to 3:21.
 - A. The blessings of the believer, 1:3–14.
 - 1. A hymn of praise, 1:3–10.
 - 2. The believers sealed unto salvation, 1:11–14.
 - B. A prayer for the church, 1:15–23.
 - C. Jew and Gentile one in Christ, 2:1–22.
 - 1. Regeneration by the power of God, 2:1–10.
 - 2. All are one in Christ, 2:11–22.
 - D. The revelation of the mystery, 3:1–21.
 - 1. It has been made known to apostles and prophets, 3:1–6.
 - 2. God’s wisdom manifest through the church, 3:7–13.
 - 3. A prayer for believers and a doxology, 3:14–21.
- III. The Practical Section, 4:1 to 6:20.
 - A. Unity through the gifts of the Spirit, 4:1–16.
 - 1. A plea for unity of life, 4:1–6.
 - 2. The nature and purpose of the gifts, 4:7–16.
 - B. Reformation of life, 4:17 to 5:21.
 - 1. Spiritual darkness contrasted with spiritual life, 4:17–24.
 - 2. The quality of the reformed life, 4:25–32.
 - 3. An exhortation to purity of life, 5:1–14.
 - 4. Foolishness and wisdom, 5:15–21.
 - C. Duties of home relationships, 5:22 to 6:9.
 - 1. Husband and wife, 5:22–33.
 - 2. Children and parents, 6:1–4.
 - 3. Servants and masters, 6:5–9.

D. The Christian's armor, 6:10–20.

IV. Conclusion and Benediction, 6:21–24.

CHAPTER 1

1 *After the salutation, 3 and thanksgiving for the Ephesians, 4 he treateth of our election, 6 and adoption by grace, 11 which is the true and proper fountain of man's salvation. 13 And because the height of this mystery cannot easily be attained unto, 16 he prayeth that they may come 18 to the full knowledge and 20 possession thereof in Christ.*

1. Paul. See on Rom. 1:1.

Apostle. Gr. *apostolos* (see on Acts 1:2).

Jesus Christ. For the significance of these titles see on Matt. 1:1.

Will of God. Compare 1 Cor. 1:1; 2 Cor. 1:1; Col. 1:1; 2 Tim. 1:1; see on 1 Cor. 1:1.

Paul was not seeking to enhance his personal authority, but, rather, to express a clear sense of calling and obligation (cf. 2 Cor. 8:5). His call had come directly from God (see on Gal. 1:15, 16). His firm conviction of this was the secret of his powerful ministry and devoted Christian life and the source of his courage and faith under suffering.

Saints. Gr. *hagioi*, literally, “holy ones” (see on Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:2). The Greek word denotes separation from common condition and use.

At Ephesus. Textual evidence is divided (cf. p. 10) between retaining and omitting this expression (see p. 993; Vol. V, p. 182). If this phrase is omitted, the last part of this verse may be translated, “to the saints, those who are also faithful in Christ Jesus.”

Faithful. Gr. *pistoi*, “faithful,” “believing.”

In Christ Jesus. This, or any one of its related forms—“in Christ,” “in him,” “in whom,” “in the Lord,” “in the beloved”—may be considered as the key phrase of this epistle. These expressions occur frequently in the epistle and designate Jesus Christ as the sphere, or medium, in which the believer lives and moves. They emphasize the close unity that exists between the Christian and his Lord. Everything that the Christian does he does with reference to his Lord.

2. Grace ... and peace. For the meaning of this salutation see on Rom. 1:7.

God ... Jesus Christ. By naming both the Father and the Son as the source of spiritual blessing, Paul emphasizes the equality that exists between them (cf. on Rom. 1:7).

3. Blessed be the God. This expression of praise introduces one of the most sublime passages of Scripture, sometimes called the “gateway of praise.” Verses 3–14 survey the course of the revelation of divine grace and set forth promises of God's redeeming love and the glorious privileges of the church. These verses may be regarded as the plan of salvation in outline.

Hath blessed. Gr. *eulogeō*, “to give praise,” “to bless,” the verb form related to the adjective *eulogētos*.

All spiritual blessings. Literally, “every spiritual blessing.” A spiritual blessing is one belonging to or activated by the Spirit.

In heavenly places. Gr. *en tois epouraniois*, “in the heavenly [places].” This phrase is peculiar to Ephesians, being used five times in the epistle (chs. 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). In ch. 6:12 the phrase is translated “in high places.” However, the word translated “heavenly” occurs elsewhere (John 3:12; 1 Cor. 15:48; Phil. 2:10; etc.). In Eph. 1:20 the

phrase *en tois epouraniois* is apparently used as a synonym for heaven, for it is the place where Christ sits on the right hand of the Father. This seems to be its meaning also in ch. 2:6. If we are raised together with Christ, and are “in Christ Jesus,” and Christ is at the right hand of God in heaven, then we, in that sense, are sitting with Him in heaven. In ch. 3:10 *en tois epouraniois* describes the dwelling place of angel powers, probably of good angels, and in ch. 6:12 of evil angels. In ch. 1:3 the phrase seems to qualify “spiritual blessings” by designating heaven as the source of them.

In Christ. See on v. 1.

4. According as. Verses 4–6 have sometimes been used to support the doctrine that certain ones are elected to be saved and others to be lost, and that nothing the individual can do will affect the result. True, the passage does speak of certain ones being chosen before the foundation of the world and being predestinated, or ordained, to be adopted as children. But it says nothing of any being chosen to be lost. Furthermore, those chosen are designated as “us,” meaning Christians, those who by faith have accepted the Lord Jesus Christ. Before the foundation of the world, when the plan of salvation was laid, it was determined that those who accepted the provisions of the plan would be restored to sonship. It was God’s desire that all would accept the plan and be saved (1 Tim. 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9). For a discussion of the problem of predestination see on Rom. 8:29.

Chosen us. The Midrash Rabbah, on Gen. 1:3 (Soncino ed., p. 6), says that God chose Israel before creation. Paul is here expressing a similar thought concerning the church, or spiritual Israel. It is general election, not individual election.

In him. Christ is the sphere in which the choosing can be made, for all spiritual life centers in Him. One coming to Christ is chosen to be saved, in the same way as one joining a choir is chosen to sing. Hence it is not an arbitrary selection. God purposes to save all who choose to place their faith in Christ as their Redeemer.

Before the foundation. The plan of salvation was laid before the creation of the world. It was then that God purposed to save those who would cooperate with His plan (cf. on Rev. 13:8).

Holy. Gr. *hagioi* (see on Rom. 1:7; cf. AA 51). To be holy is to reflect the divine image, for God is holy (1 Peter 1:16). The purpose of the plan of salvation is to restore the divine image in man (see Ed 125).

Without blame. Gr. *amōmoi*, “without blemish,” “faultless.” In ch. 5:27 the word is translated “without blemish” and in Rev. 14:5 “without fault.” In the LXX *amōmos* translates the Heb. *tamim*, which means “without blemish.” *Tamim* is used to describe the sacrificial victims, which were to be without blemish or spot (Lev. 1:3; etc.). *Amōmos* is used to describe Christ’s perfect sacrifice (Heb. 9:14; 1 Peter 1:19).

In love. This phrase may be connected either with v. 4 as in the KJV or with v. 5 so as to make that verse read “in love having predestinated. . .” The Old Latin and Syriac Peshita versions connect it with v. 5. On the other hand the Vulgate and some of the later uncials connect it with v. 4. The ancient Greek manuscripts are without value as far as determining the thought division here inasmuch as they had either no punctuation and word separation, or at best only the most rudimentary kind. The phrase makes good sense

connected with either verse. All the divine operations spring from the basic attribute of God's character, love. For a definition of love (*agapē*) see on Matt. 5:43, 44; 1 Cor. 13:1.

5. Predestinated. Gr. *proorizō* (see on Rom. 8:29; cf. on Eph. 1:4).

Adoption of children. Gr. *huiiothesia*, literally, "a placing as a son" (see on Rom. 8:15).

By Jesus Christ. Or, "through Jesus Christ." He is the agent in the plan of salvation, the mediator between God and man (1 Tim. 2:5). Far from being an angry God who requires appeasement, the Father is working through Christ to accomplish His purpose—man's salvation. Compare Gal. 4:3–5.

Good pleasure. Gr. *eudokia*, "good will," "good pleasure." Phrases such as "good pleasure of his will," where two synonymous abstract terms are compounded, are characteristic of the style of Ephesians. It was God's good pleasure to devise and put into operation the plan of salvation, whereby as many as fixed their faith in Jesus Christ should be adopted as children into the family of God (John 3:16; Rev. 22:17).

6. To the praise. Or, "unto the praise." As a result of the revelation of God's grace in the adoption, the universe will gain a true conception of the character and purposes of God and respond with expressions of praise. One of the purposes of the plan of salvation is the vindication of the character of God before the universe (see PP 68; cf. DA 625, 626; Eph. 3:10, 11).

Glory of his grace. The abundance and fullness of God's grace is a prominent theme in this epistle, and is presented as a prime cause for confidence and hope. For a definition of grace see on Rom. 3:24.

Wherein. Important textual evidence may be cited (cf. p. 10) for the reading "which." With this reading the passage may be translated "which he graciously bestowed upon us in the beloved."

Made ... accepted. Gr. *charitoō*, "to endow with grace," "to make graceful." Here the former meaning obviously applies. The idea is of grace freely bestowed, by which we have been enriched or beautified. The One who gave up His Son to an ignominious death also gives abundantly of His other riches (Rom. 8:32). God's mercy, favor, gracious disposition to us, permit a relationship to Him that would otherwise be impossible. God cannot be bought, bribed, or cajoled; what He does, He does out of His own good will and divine purpose.

In the beloved. Another form of the key phrase of this epistle (see on v. 1). The designation of the Son as the Beloved is appropriate here. We are brought nigh to God by the Beloved One, and in turn may be called beloved children (ch. 5:1). Those whom God endows with His grace are loved by Him in the same way that He loves His own Son.

7. In whom. This redemption is brought about by something more than a kind of cooperation with Christ or a mere mystical union with Him. Christ is the "living sphere" of redemption; it is *in* His person that the great work is accomplished. He is at once the Architect, the Master Builder, and the Cornerstone. He is the Shepherd as well as the Door to the fold (John 10:1–14).

Redemption. Gr. *apolutrōsis*, "a buying back," "a ransoming," "a deliverance" (see on Rom. 3:24).

Through his blood. The life is in the blood (Lev. 17:11). The spilled blood of Christ represents the life that has been laid down to redeem man.

Forgiveness of sins. Redemption is deliverance from a bondage under which man has placed himself through transgression—deliverance at an unspeakable price. The shedding of His blood was “for the remission of sins” (see on Matt. 26:28).

Riches of his grace. Compare riches of kindness (Rom. 2:4), glory (Eph. 3:16; Phil. 4:19; Col. 1:27), etc.

8. Abounded toward us. Or, “lavished upon us” (RSV). The riches of God’s grace not only supply every need, they overflow into additional gifts. All nature testifies to the bountiful hand by which the Creator has endowed His works. The suppliant for grace discovers that He is no less generous with His spiritual gifts.

In all wisdom and prudence. This phrase may be connected with either the foregoing or the following. If it is considered as part of v. 8, it states the sphere in which God’s free gift of grace is lavished upon us; “wisdom” and “prudence” are His gifts to us. If the phrase is considered as the first part of v. 9, then it refers to qualities of God Himself. The unpunctuated, ancient manuscripts allow either interpretation.

9. Mystery. Gr. *mustērion* (see on Rom. 11:25). The time was ripe for the unfolding of the mystery of God’s will. The world had long been in preparation for this hour, and the apostle Paul had been highly honored in being one of the bearers of a secret that had been “hid from ages and from generations” (Col. 1:26; cf. Eph. 3:3). The superabundance of God’s grace had been a mystery until proclaimed in the life and death of Christ, and its extent and application to the Gentiles was only now becoming known. It is this last that is largely the burden of Paul’s present writing.

Some have contended that Paul here drew three words—“mystery,” “knowledge,” and “wisdom”—from the pagan mystery religions. However, these words and concepts are not confined to these religions. Their Hebrew equivalents are found in the Dead Sea scrolls, reflecting Jewish concepts. He could well have been drawing on Judaic concepts and vocabulary, placing them, by means of his inspired mind, in that richer setting with reference to God that Christianity provides.

Good pleasure. See on v. 5. It was God’s gracious purpose to make this revelation. He was not in the position of finding Himself in a dilemma when faced with the outbreak of sin, nor did He grudgingly set about the glorious, but agonizing, work of redemption. He needed no urging, nor was He influenced by circumstances apart from Himself. What God has done for man He was pleased to do. It is not an adequate or a reverent picture of the character of God to present Him as reluctantly yielding to the persuasions of man or of Christ before He is willing to forgive sin or to come to the aid of His stricken creatures.

Himself. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading “him,” probably meaning “Christ.”

10. Dispensation. Gr. *oikonomia*, “stewardship,” that is, the office of a steward, “arrangement,” “plan.” Paul seems here to be referring to the plan of salvation, which would ultimately accomplish the unity here portrayed.

Fulness of times. The plural suggests a succession of time periods or seasons (cf. on 1 Cor. 10:11). The entire gospel age seems to be comprehended. As there are appropriate times for the sowing of the seed and the gathering of the harvest, there are also suitable seasons for God’s activities in connection with the redemption of men. There are some

things that could be accomplished at one time and not at another, because He is dealing with beings who are free moral agents whom He will not even attempt to force into compliance with His purposes. Through the ages there have been successive unfoldings of the plans of God, stages of development leading up to the final consummation when there will be a universal unity. The apostle enlarges on this theme as he proceeds with his epistle.

Gather together. Gr. *anakephalaioō*, “to sum up,” “to head up,” “to bring to a focus.” The word occurs in the NT only here and in Rom. 13:9, where Paul describes the law as being summed up.

All things in Christ. This is the divine purpose—the restoration of a lost unity. It must necessarily be in Christ, because He is the center of all things. All things were made by Him; He upholds all things by the word of His power; He is the center of the church and its supreme hope. The Christian life is no solitary adventure into the kingdom of God; the Christian is a member of a community, the body of Christ, the church. The unity of God’s universe had been broken by sin. The mystery of God’s will was His plan to restore this unity when the occasion was ready, a restoration to be accomplished through Christ. That mystery will find its culmination at the end of the great controversy, when all things in heaven and on earth will be united in Christ, and the character of the Godhead will have been vindicated.

In him. These words may be considered as part of v. 11 rather than of v. 10, where they are merely a repetition.

11. Obtained an inheritance. Or, “were chosen [by lot].” Every believer is already in possession of his inheritance by promise. The Christian’s inheritance comes to him as a right by the adoption mentioned in v. 5. This inheritance is in Christ, who purchased it with His blood.

Being predestinated. Or, “being marked out beforehand” (see on vs. 4, 5). Predestination is referred to here again, probably in order to show that the obtaining of the inheritance was no accident or chance. It was in line with God’s predetermined purpose.

Counsel of his own will. It is cause for assurance that God works according to His will and not according to that of man, for man’s will is capricious and unpredictable. Men challenge, or question, the acts of God and deign to ascribe to Him the same changeableness that is in themselves, forgetting that behind His every act stand His perfection and His infinite love. Since in Him is infinite wisdom joined with infinite love and sovereign will, He is under no constraint nor necessity.

12. Praise of his glory. Compare on v. 6.

Who first trusted in Christ. Literally, “who have hoped before [and still hope] in Christ.” These words have special application to the Jewish Christians, who, through their fathers, were the first to be partakers of the inheritance, for even from Abraham’s time the Jews had looked forward to the Messiah. They were highly privileged that they might live and labor “to the praise of his glory,” even as Christians who hold the gospel truth today are stewards of His grace in relation to the heathen world.

Christian hope is more than simply a wish for the future, for it is founded on the promises of God in Christ. The Scriptures speak of “full assurance of hope” (Heb. 6:11), “a lively hope” (1 Peter 1:3), hope that “maketh not ashamed” (Rom. 5:5), “the God of

hope” (Rom. 15:13). There is a deeply embedded instinct in the human heart that looks for a happy ending to life’s tragic affairs. God planted it there.

It was the privilege of the Jewish Christians first to hope in Christ. Paul mentions his kinsmen Andronicus and Junia as having been in Christ before he was (Rom. 16:7), and he doubtless always regretted his earlier wasted years. Happy are they who come to Christ in their youth and commit their entire life to Him rather than offer the remnants of the wasted years. Hope is like a rope let down to a drowning man. How foolish of him to debate the intentions of the one throwing it down or to question its strength! The perishing one takes hold of the “blessed hope” and finds that it sustains him and brings him to Christ who offers eternal life.

13. *Trusted.* This word is supplied. Other interpretations, calling for other readings, have been suggested: (1) that the thought goes back to the first part of v. 11 and that “have obtained an inheritance” should be supplied, making the passage read, “among whom ye also have obtained an inheritance”; (2) that “are” should be supplied, making the passage read, “among whom also ye are”; (3) that the thought goes forward to the “were sealed” near the end of the verse, in which case no word would be supplied and the passage would read, “In whom ye also ... were sealed” (see RSV). Against the supplied word “trusted” it is urged that the word in v. 12 is really “hoped before” (a single word in the Greek) and that this idea does not fit v. 13.

The word of truth. The word of truth is here defined as the “gospel of your salvation” (cf. Rom. 1:16). We are urged to take heed to that word (Mark 4:24), to receive it with meekness (James 1:21), and with faith (Heb. 4:2), for it is the means to eternal life. The truth is more than a collection of statements of fact, which would have no salvation in them as such; the truth must finally bring us to Him who is “the way, the truth, and the life” (John 14:6). Every noble impulse that arises in any man’s soul, Christian or heathen, springs from that one Source. Indeed, the influence of the Holy Spirit is necessary to the effective reception of the truth (1 Cor. 2:12–15). Like the seed that fell on poor soil, the written or spoken word has no power to change the life except it be accompanied by the Living Word.

Sealed. Gr. *sphragizō* (see on 2 Cor. 1:22; cf. on John 6:27). There is an orderly change in the believer’s life: first there is the hearing, then the believing, and then the sealing that puts upon him, as it were, an impression or stamp.

Holy Spirit of promise. The Holy Spirit was so called because He was promised from former times (Isa. 32:15; Eze. 36:26; Joel 2:28), and also by Christ Himself (John 14:16, 17). It is the Spirit of promise who seals, or identifies, those who are His own (2 Tim. 2:19), and secures them until the day of redemption (Eph. 4:30). He is identified here as the agent of the sealing. Those who are sealed have the witness within themselves that they are the children of God (1 John 5:10).

The Holy spirit assures us that the promises of God are true, and it is this conviction that largely distinguishes believers from nonbelievers. The seal is placed upon all who choose to become saints.

14. *Earnest.* Gr. *arrabōn* (see on 2 Cor. 1:22). The thought of the whole passage is that the Holy Spirit had been promised in God’s Word, and when that Word was believed the Holy Spirit was received and the believers were sealed, that sealing being a further promise of the ultimate fulfillment of all God’s promises to men.

The child of God has the privilege even now of tasting the heavenly joys, and, indeed, he may well question his experience if he does not do so. He may be deeply assured of the resurrection of the body, the return of the Lord, the gift of immortality, and all the eternal realities. The promise is certain, since it is guaranteed by God Himself through the Divine Spirit.

Redemption. See on v. 7. Redemption is here thought of as being future, although the believer has already been saved by virtue of his acceptance of Christ. We still await the full liberation from sin and its consequences; there is a glory yet to be revealed.

Purchased possession. Gr. *peripoiēsis*, “an acquisition,” “an obtaining,” “a taking possession of.” The word *peripoiēsis* is translated “peculiar” in 1 Peter 2:9, in the phrase “peculiar people,” literally, “a people for acquisition,” or “a [God-] possessed people.” Some commentators apply Paul’s phrase to the saints as God’s purchased possession, others to the inheritance that the saints acquire (see on Eph. 1:18). The latter view seems to be the one required by the context. The saints look forward to the future possession of which the Holy Spirit is the earnest.

Praise of his glory. See on v. 6. On this exalted note ends the remarkable introduction to this epistle. As Paul’s thought ranges from “before the foundation of the world” to “the redemption of the purchased possession,” he sees Christ as the center of it all. Everything is “in him.” Paul presents this idea, not as a theological abstraction, but as a matter of the most practical concern. He is not weaving a philosophy or writing a treatise on the problem of predestination and free will. He sees Christ harmonizing every intellectual and moral problem that men have to face.

15. Wherefore I also. Because of the blessings described in vs. 1–14 the apostle now utters a prayer of praise and thanksgiving.

Heard. During his imprisonment Paul frequently received messages from, and concerning, the churches he had raised up, and he was both pleased and saddened at the things he heard. The faith of the Ephesians was a source of great encouragement to him.

Love unto all. Important textual evidence may be cited (cf. p. 10) for the omission of the word “love.” However, the word is needed to complete properly the thought of the sentence. Paul elsewhere joins together faith and love (1 Cor. 13:13; 1 Thess. 1:3; etc.), for these are what distinguish all true Christians. Love to the saints is a natural outcome of faith in Christ. It is impossible to love God without loving the saints (1 John 4:20), and, indeed, those who are not so saintly. The love Paul commends is comprehensive, including *all* the saints, even those whom it may be difficult to love because of their various habits and temperaments.

16. To give thanks. Similar statements of thanksgiving are found in Rom. 1:8; 1 Cor. 1:4; Phil. 1:3; Col. 1:3; 1 Thess. 1:2; 2 Thess. 1:3; 2 Tim. 1:3; Philemon 4, 5. Paul’s spirit of gratitude was “without ceasing,” and found expression on many occasions. The frequency of Paul’s outbursts of thanksgiving is an indication of the joyous and radiant nature of his spirit, without which he could never have endured his various sufferings. The note of joy and thanksgiving is sadly lacking in many Christian lives; the remedy is partly to be found in the sharing of happy experiences in the religious life.

Making mention. A study of the prayers of Paul reveals that his petitions were largely for his churches and for individuals (see Rom. 1:9; Phil. 1:4).

17. The God. That God the Father is described as the God of Jesus Christ in no way implies subordination of the Son (see on John 14:28). In praying to God we identify

ourselves with our Elder Brother, even though we but partially comprehend the significance of the relationship.

Father of glory. Compare on Acts 7:2. The expression may mean the Father to whom the glory belongs as a characteristic quality. For a definition of “glory” see on Rom. 3:23. Compare the use of the word “glory” in Eph. 1:18, where it is suggested that the believer who has the Father of glory for his own has also the inheritance of glory. As the Father glorified the Son with the glory that He had with Him before the foundation of the world (John 17:24), so He will glorify those who come to Him through Christ (2 Cor. 3:18).

The spirit. Or, “a spirit.” The expression may refer to an illuminated human spirit, though it is true that wisdom and revelation come from the Holy Spirit (see Luke 12:12; John 14:26; 1 Cor. 2:9, 10).

Wisdom. Gr. *sophia* (see on Luke 2:52), corresponding to the Heb. *chokmah*, for a definition of which see on Prov. 1:2.

Revelation. Probably Paul is here referring, not to direct communications from God, but to the ability to understand what God has revealed. It is necessary to exercise more than reason to come to a true knowledge of God. There must be a divine enlightenment, a spiritual vision, given directly by God to the believing soul.

Knowledge. Gr. *epignōsis*, “full knowledge,” or “precise knowledge.” This is not merely an acknowledgement of God but a distinct knowledge of Him. This knowledge comes to those willing to accept God’s revelation of Himself. It is not speculative knowledge alone or simply intellectual assent; it is rather an experimental knowledge that comes to those whose spiritual faculties are quickened and who have become sensitive to spiritual truth. Such knowledge is progressive. Day by day God reveals new aspects of His character to thrill the soul and to inspire it to holier living.

Of him. That is, of God, as shown in vs. 18–20.

18. Eyes of your understanding. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading “eyes of your heart.” This striking phrase occurs nowhere else in the NT. By “heart” the Hebrews represented the seat of the thoughts, will, and emotions (see on Rom. 1:21). This seems to be Paul’s use of the expression here. “Eyes” represent insight, and enlightened eyes, spiritual awareness and moral comprehension. “Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard” what the spiritually opened eyes see (see on 1 Cor. 2:9, 10). A new and deep illumination takes place that affects the innermost personality. It is not a new faculty or gift; it is a new vision or insight.

May know. The apostle lists three items of knowledge that come to those whose eyes are enlightened (vs. 18, 19).

Hope. See on Rom. 5:2–5; 8:24. Some commentators believe that in this present passage Paul refers, not to the thing hoped for, but to the principle of hope in the life that is inspired by the divine calling. To have that hope is to have something precious beyond measure. Paul’s readers still did not comprehend the full meaning of their calling, and he was anxious that they should see that the Christian’s hope is based on the facts of redemption, “Christ in you, the hope of glory” (Col. 1:27, 28). They had forgiveness of sins, they were children of God, but still their eyes were holden. He wanted them to have the hope that would suggest to them more than they had dreamed of. Hope is a mixture of faith and assurance, but it looks to the future for its completion. The believer may know that if he is called by God through the Spirit, his whole life will become suffused with the blessed hope.

Other commentators hold that by “hope” Paul refers to the end objective of the call of God—the heights of spiritual attainment to which He calls His saints, and the ultimate glorification which will see the saints restored to the estate from which man has fallen.

Calling. See on Rom. 8:30.

Inheritance. This term has been understood as referring either to the saints as God’s heritage or to the privileges enjoyed by the saints as God’s heirs. The redeemed are elsewhere spoken of as God’s treasure, wealth, or inheritance (Ex. 19:5). They are His by creation and by redemption. They have been “bought with a price” (1 Cor. 6:20), and consequently He takes pleasure in His inheritance.

Viewed as the privilege of the saints, the inheritance is glorious and rich, for “he that overcometh shall inherit all things” (Rev. 21:7). The riches of God’s grace, love, power, mercy, and kingdom are shared with His faithful children (cf. Phil. 4:19).

19. Power to us-ward. In addition to knowledge of the “hope” and of the “riches” (v. 18), the apostle prays for experimental knowledge of the power of God in the life. Our feeble natures are revived and transformed by divine energy in conversion and sanctification. The holding out of “the hope of his calling” (v. 18) would be most tantalizing and unsatisfactory were it not for the accompanying power.

Who believe. Faith is the channel that makes possible the working of divine power (see on Rom. 4:3–5).

According to the working. The standard, or norm, of God’s power is what it works or accomplishes in Christ (v. 20).

Power. Gr. *kratos*, “strength,” “force.” This word for “power” is used in the NT only in connection with God or with His word. God’s mighty power is displayed in the transformation of a sinner into a saint. This remarkable change is not accomplished by psychology, education, or good works; it is an act of divine grace and power.

20. Wrought in Christ. See on v. 19.

When he raised. It is a marvelous fact that the same power that wrought the resurrection of Christ now works in the hearts of believers. It was upon Christ’s dead body that the power operated, and it is upon those who are “dead in trespasses and sins” that it again works (Eph. 2:1; cf. Rom. 8:11; 2 Cor. 4:14). Christ came forth with a glorified body, and assumed authority at the right hand of God. His resurrection is a pledge of the resurrection of the saints (Rom. 4:25; 1 Cor. 15:20–22), and His exaltation a pledge of the final exaltation of the saints (cf. Eph. 1:18).

Right hand. The right hand is the position of authority. The idea of Christ’s sharing authority with the Father is expressly stated elsewhere in Scripture (John 1:1; 17:5; Acts 7:55; Rev. 3:21).

Heavenly places. See on v. 3.

21. All principality ... and dominion. This series is commonly understood as referring to angelic powers (cf. on Eph. 6:12; Rom. 8:38), possibly either good or bad. Christ is superior to all powers, both heavenly and earthly. He is Sovereign Lord, with supreme and universal authority (see on Rom. 8:38; cf. 1 Cor. 15:24; Eph. 3:10; 6:12; Col. 1:16). Paul is anxious at all times to make clear that Christ should not be regarded as a subdeity, a concept that might easily be accepted in view of the growing influence of the Gnostic heresy. He uses the terms already familiar in current Jewish teachings (see the apocryphal work Enoch 61:10) and sets forth the truth that Christ is above all other beings, no matter what their real or supposed rank might be.

Every name. The phrase is all-inclusive, used as if to bring the accumulated series to a climax. There is no name that can be compared with His because there is no being who can be compared with Him.

World. Gr. *aiōn*, “age,” “era” (see on Matt. 13:39). “This world” may be viewed as denoting the present order in both heaven and earth, and the world “to come,” as the future age for the universe. As a result of His humiliation and His exaltation Christ will be acknowledged as universally supreme not only in this age but also in the age to come.

22. Under his feet. See on 1 Cor. 15:24–28.

Head over all things. This relationship implies more than rulership. Headship, as used in this epistle, includes the idea of vital union and relationship (Eph. 4:15, 16; Col. 2:19). The head is the active center of all the operations of the body. Paul is emphasizing the idea of unity, well illustrated in the close relationship that exists between the head and the body.

Church. Gr. *ekklēsia* (see on Matt. 18:17).

23. His body. Christ the Head, is the seat of all authority for the church. The analogy of the church and the human body is very close. While the body is one and the church is one, both are made up of various members, each having his own gifts and temperaments. Although there is a great diversity of gifts, that does not preclude harmonious association and operation. In fact, the members can perform their proper functions only when they do work together.

Fulness. Gr. *plērōma*, “full number,” “full extent,” “entire contents”; also “complement.” The word refers to that which is filled (passive sense), or to the filled condition of a thing (cf. on Col. 1:19). Paul sees the church as the body of Christ filled with the fullness of God (Eph. 3:19). Christ has poured His fullness, His qualities, into the church, filling it with holy life; indeed, with abounding life. In Colossians, Paul emphasizes the deity of the Head, in Ephesians the privileges of the body.

Filleth. See on ch. 4:10.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 3 TM 518
- 3–5FE 403
- 3–75T 729
- 6 DA 113, 675, 834; ML 11, 260; PK 313; 5T 229
- 7 CH 17; SC 55; 5T 635; 6T 257
- 9 AA 159
- 14 AH 128, 540; DA 827; GC 674; PK 682; PP 67
- 17 TM 104; 8T 335
- 17, 18 ML 44, 360
- 17–19GC ix; 5T 740; 7T 154
- 18 FE 112; MB 89; ML 264; 6T 309
- 19 DA 200; GW 262
- 20, 21 DA 787; ML 295; SR 427
- 22, 23 DA 414; Ed 268; FE 413; 1T 283

CHAPTER 2

- 1 *By comparing what we were by 3 nature, with what we are 5 by grace: 10 he declareth, that we are made for good works; and 13 being brought near by Christ, should not live as*

11 *Gentiles*, and 12 *foreigners in time past*, but as 19 *citizens with the saints*, and the *family of God*.

1. Quickened. This word is supplied. The Greek does not introduce the verb until v. 5. But the construction is difficult to follow unless the verb is introduced earlier. For a discussion of “quickened” see on v. 5.

Dead. Man is suffering from more than social maladjustment or annoying complexes—he is in a state of spiritual death. The state of the unregenerate has a close analogy to physical death. In the latter there is lacking the living principle that is essential to growth and energy, and this is precisely the condition of the spiritually dead (Eph. 5:14; John 6:53; 1 John 3:14; 5:12; Rev. 3:1).

Trespasses and sins. Literally, “the trespasses and the sins.” The force of the articles becomes clear when the following clause is added without punctuation, “in which ...” The two terms are probably used cumulatively to stress the various aspects of sin.

2. In time past. That is, prior to conversion.

Walked. Gr. *peripateō*, literally, “to walk around,” metaphorically, “to live,” “to pass one’s life,” etc. In the majority of NT occurrences (used mostly by Paul and John) this word has the metaphorical meaning “conduct of life.” Compare the use of the Heb. *halak* (see on Gen. 5:22). For the sense of “to live” in this epistle compare Eph. 2:10; 4:1; 5:8, 15. In contrast with the walk of the unregenerate in “trespasses and sins” stands the “walk” of the regenerate in “good works” (ch. 2:10).

Course. Gr. *aiōn*, literally, “age” (see on Matt. 13:39). But *aiōn* not only expresses “time,” it may denote also the kind of living that belongs to the age—disunity and separation from God.

World. Gr. *kosmos* (see on Matt. 4:8). *Kosmos* is sometimes used almost as a synonym of *aiōn* (compare 1 Cor. 3:19 with 1 Cor. 2:6), yet the distinction remains that *aiōn* is a period of time, sometimes considered from the point of view of its outstanding characteristic, whereas *kosmos* is the world in that period.

The prince. That is, the devil. Jesus calls him “the prince of this world” (John 12:31). Rationalism says that Satan is merely a mythological figure. The devil is only too willing to have men believe that he does not exist. The Scriptures clearly present him as a real being (see on Matt. 4:3).

The air. Probably meaning the atmospheric heavens. The expression may emphasize the fact that the demonic beings are invisible and inhabit the air around us.

Children of disobedience. That is, disobedient children, or disobedient people. This class is born of disobedience, is disobedient in very nature, and is subject to condemnation (ch. 5:6). Natural man is essentially antagonistic to God and in a state of rebellion (Ps. 68:6; Isa. 1:2; 63:10; etc.).

3. Also we all. After having addressed Gentiles in vs. 1, 2, Paul now compares their status with that of the Jews and shows that he and his countrymen were also in the class of “children of disobedience” (see Rom. 2:1; cf. ch. 3:20). The Fall brought all men down to a common level (Rom. 3:9, 23; Gal. 3:22).

Had our conversation. Gr. *anastrephō*, literally, “to turn hither and thither,” hence, “to conduct oneself.” In Old English “to have one’s conversation” had this meaning.

Anastrephō does not refer to speech, except as speech is one of many aspects of a person's behavior.

Lusts of our flesh. The impulses of the lower nature (see on Rom. 7:5; Rom. 8:4–7).

Fulfilling the desires. That is, doing the wishes of the flesh and the unregenerate mind. Sin lies deep within the human nature, the grosser animal sins as well as the uncontrolled imaginings of the mind.

Children of wrath. That is, children worthy of wrath, or people deserving wrath. For a definition of the wrath of God see on Rom. 1:18. For the manner in which the sin of Adam resulted in his posterity's becoming "children of wrath" see on Rom. 5:12. Compare the expression "vessels of wrath" (see on Rom. 9:22).

4. But God. Verses 2, 3 present a gloomy picture of what seems inevitable doom; now Paul introduces the alternative.

Rich in mercy. God is not only merciful; He is *rich* in mercy to all who call upon Him (see Rom. 10:12), not because they are worthy of it, but because it is God's good pleasure to bestow mercy (Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3).

Great love. God's love is something more than compassion; it leads to beneficent action and is unchanging. God loved us "while we were yet sinners" (see on Rom. 5:8), and will never cease to love us. It was this love that motivated His work of salvation (John 3:16). Love is a prime attribute of His character (1 John 4:8), finding its highest expression in the person of Christ. God has mercy upon us because we are sinners, and He loves us because we are His creatures. His great work for man was not merely an act of benevolence or charitable condescension; it was an act of affection, of love. For a discussion of the word here translated "love" (*agapē* see on Matt. 5:43; 1 Cor. 13:1).

5. Dead in sins. This phrase may be connected with "loved us," thus calling attention to God's great love for us "while we were yet sinners" (see on Rom. 5:8).

Quickened. Gr. *suzōopoieō* "to make alive together" (see on v. 1). This word is used in the NT only here and in Col. 2:13. It and its simpler form, *zōopoieō*, "to make alive," are used 14 times in the NT, and refer to a change from death to life, a rebirth, a new life. As Christ was quickened from the grave, so man is quickened from spiritual death. It is God's purpose to bring man into a new sphere, a new relationship in which he is governed by new principles.

Together with Christ. We are crucified with Him, we die with Him, we rise with Him, we live with Him, we reign with Him, we are joint heirs with Him, we suffer with Him, we share His glory (see Rom. 6:3–8; 8:17; Gal. 2:20). Salvation is achieved not by instruction or moral suasion, but by the believer's having access, through faith, to the energizing life that flows from Christ.

By grace ye are saved. See on v. 8. The apostle is full of the subject of salvation by grace, and thus throws in this thought parenthetically here so as to highlight God's wonderful act. The form of the verb indicates a past act resulting in a present condition. There are three aspects of salvation—past, present, and future (see on Rom. 8:24).

6. Raised us up. Compare Rom. 6:5; Phil. 3:10. We are raised by the vivifying power of God's grace, to live a new life in Christ Jesus.

Sit together. Christ is in heaven seated at the right hand of God (Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1), and we, by accepting Him as our great representative, may be there also in a spiritual sense, sharing His throne.

Heavenly places. See on ch. 1:3. Those who see Christ as sitting at the right hand of God may dwell in the atmosphere of heaven while here on earth. Believers now belong to the heavenly world, in that Christ's entrance to the heavenly courts was a pledge of the entrance of all who would accept salvation. The spiritual life on earth then becomes a foretaste, an anticipation, of the heavenly life. Christ is with us by His Holy Spirit (Matt. 28:20), and He counts us as already dwelling with Him.

In Christ Jesus. This is the key phrase of the passage, and stands in strong contrast to the phrase "dead in sins" (see on v. 5).

7. Ages to come. Or, "the coming aeons," ages of eternity. Paul conceives of eternity as an endless succession of time periods, not as timeless.

Shew. Or, "display." This verse states one of the beneficent purposes of the work of grace.

Exceeding riches. No single life or age is sufficient to reveal all the riches of God's grace; eternity is needed. Throughout endless ages the existence of the redeemed hosts will display the "exceeding riches of his grace" (cf. on ch. 1:6).

Kindness. Christ was the particular channel through which God demonstrated His kindness toward men. "God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself" (2 Cor. 5:19).

8. By grace ... through faith. It is grace on God's part and faith on man's part. Faith accepts the gift of God. It is through the act of entrusting ourselves to Him that we are saved, not that faith is the means of our salvation, but simply the channel (see on Rom. 4:3). For a definition of "grace" see on Rom. 3:24. For a discussion of "faith" in relation to salvation see on Rom. 4:3.

Not of yourselves. That is, the salvation is not effected by human effort.

Gift of God. Salvation is a free gift, without money or price (see Isa. 55:1; John 4:14; 2 Cor. 9:15; 1 John 5:11).

9. Not of works. See on Gal. 2:16; cf. on Rom. 4:4. Works are not a cause but an effect of salvation (see on Rom. 3:31).

Boast. No man will ever be able to boast of himself, "I have earned salvation." One purpose of the plan of salvation is to show in the ages of eternity the riches of God's grace (ch. 1:7). Thus there is to be no room for any boasting by man.

10. His workmanship. Gr. *poiēma*, "that which is made or done," "a work," "a creation." The English word "poem" is derived from *poiēma*. The reference here is to God's spiritual re-creation of man. We are remade by Him for the purpose of "good works."

Created in Christ Jesus. Of himself man cannot bring forth good works. It is necessary for him to be spiritually re-created in Christ before he can produce the good works God purposes he shall bring forth. By a change of the will, affections, and purposes the privilege and duty of witnessing by good works become possible (Matt. 5:14–16).

Before ordained. Or, "prepared beforehand." Before creation it was planned that those saved by grace should have good works as a witness to the fact. That sequence was written into the spiritual code by which man was to live.

Walk in them. For the NT sense of "walk" see on v. 2. The walk here described is in contrast with that described in v. 2. Walking in good works should be a habitual practice, not as something demanded, but as a natural expression of the new life that has been

created in the believer. If one is not walking in good works, it may reasonably be asked whether he has received grace. The Architect of the universe is also the Architect of souls, working according to an eternal purpose (ch. 1:4). God has provided not only the opportunity for good works but also the means for their performance (John 15:16; 2 Tim. 2:21).

11. Wherefore remember. It is good for the Christian to recall his former estate. It was a surprise to Jew and Gentile alike to discover that both entered into the new covenant relationship with the Messiah by the same means, even though the Jew had the advantage of having first received the oracles of God (Rom. 3:1, 2).

Gentiles in the flesh. A reference to their state of uncircumcision.

Uncircumcision ... Circumcision. Distinctive terms denoting Gentiles and Jews (see on Rom. 2:25–29; Gal. 5:6).

12. Without Christ. Or, “apart from Christ,” separated from Him. This is no condemnation of the Gentiles, but simply an assertion of the fact that, being without connection with the Messiah, they were without the source or regenerative power. “Without Christ” is the tragic opposite of Paul’s oft-repeated theme phrase, “in Christ” (see on ch. 1:1).

Being aliens. Literally, “having been alienated” (cf. Eph. 2:19; Col. 1:21).

Strangers. God made His covenants with Abraham and his descendants (Gen. 12:3; 22:18). They were to make the covenant privileges available to the Gentiles and to invite them to participate in the worship of the true God (see Vol. IV, pp. 28–30). They failed to carry out God’s plan, and the Gentiles remained “aliens” and “strangers.” Before Christ came, the knowledge of the “covenants of promise” was thus confined almost entirely to the Jews.

No hope. The Gentiles had no hope in the Messiah, hence, no hope for the blessings that would flow from Him. In the catacombs of Rome the word “hope” is commonly found in Christian inscriptions, but it is never found in the inscriptions on heathen tombs.

Without God. Gr. *atheoi*, from which our word “atheist” is derived. However, the Greek word in the present context perhaps signifies no more than “not knowing God.” This is the ultimate in misery and loss. The Gentiles were not atheistic in the sense of lacking gods, for they had many gods. They were without the knowledge of the true God, whose attributes are holiness, love, justice, and mercy.

13. But now. Another of Paul’s striking contrasts for emphasis (cf. v. 4).

Far off ... nigh. With the call of the Christian church (see Vol. IV, p. 35) the gospel was preached to the Gentiles (see on Rom. 11:12). Many of them responded and thus were brought “nigh.”

By the blood. We are reconciled by His blood (Rom. 5:10; 2 Cor. 5:19), redeemed by His blood (Col. 1:14), justified by His blood (Rom. 5:9), and cleansed by His blood (1 John 1:7). The blood of Christ is the vindication of God’s good name and the proof of His love. It is said that Top-lady, the author of that beautiful hymn “Rock of Ages,” was converted by hearing a sermon on Eph. 2:13 preached by a workingman in a barn. For the relationship of the blood of Jesus to salvation see on Rom. 3:25.

14. He is our peace. The “he” is emphatic in the Greek. Christ is not only the peacemaker; He Himself is peace, the bond of union and of peace. In Him all the divisions of mankind are to be abolished. In the OT the idea of peace was often linked

with that of the Messiah (Isa. 9:6; cf. Micah 5:5). By being their peace before God, Christ effected peace between Jew and Gentile.

Made both one. There is now neither Jew nor Greek, bond nor free (Gal. 3:28).

Middle wall of partition. Literally, “partition wall of the fence,” meaning, “the partition wall which is the fence.” The imagery may have been derived from the barrier in the Temple separating the court of the Gentiles from the court of the Jews (see Vol. V, p. 67). Beyond this wall no Gentile dared go. See illustration facing p. 449.

15. Abolished. Gr. *katargeō*, “to cancel,” “to make null and void.” The verb is used of the unfruitful fig tree that “cumbered” (*katargeō*) the ground (Luke 13:7), and also of the unbelief that “makes” the faith of God “without effect” (see on Rom. 3:3).

In his flesh. That is, in the sacrifice of His body on the cross.

The enmity. This word may be considered as being in apposition either to “middle wall” or to “law of commandments.” The Greek seems to favor the former connection, although the latter is not impossible, and may be favored by the context. The two ideas are not unrelated. Christ did away with the enmity by the act of abolishing the “law of commandments contained in ordinances.”

Law of commandments. This is generally thought of as referring to the ceremonial law. It is true that the ceremonial law came to an end at the cross, but it should be remembered that the ceremonial system as God gave it did not create the enmity Paul here describes. It was the interpretation the Jews placed upon it, the additions they made to it, and the exclusive and hostile attitudes they adopted as a result, that were the basis of the hostility. The added regulations, together with the involved interpretations, served either to modify the force and function of the original commands or else greatly to nullify them. Any Gentile who wished to join the “commonwealth of Israel” (v. 12) was confronted with an involved system of legal requirements. It is easy to see how the system would hold little attraction for him, or how the God who, he believed, was the author of the system would not appeal to him. The Jewish system thus stood as an insurmountable barrier, a partition wall, preventing the Gentiles from accepting the worship of the true God. The Jews loathed and detested their Gentile neighbors, and the Gentiles, in turn, hated and despised their Jewish neighbors.

God had entrusted the Jews with the divine “oracles” (Rom. 3:2). They stood in the world as the official representatives of the true religion. Until the founding of the Christian church there was no other people to whom God could direct the seekers for salvation. Referring to the scribes and the Pharisees who “sit in Moses’ seat,” Jesus Himself counseled the people, “All therefore whatsoever they bid you observe, that observe and do” (Matt. 23:3). When the Jews rejected Christ, their status as the official representatives of the true religion was taken away from them and given to the Christian church (see on Matt. 21:43). After the crucifixion it was no longer necessary for the child of God to engage in the ritual of Judaism (see on Gal. 2:16). At first the distinction between Christianity and Judaism was not too clearly understood. Many Jewish converts believed that Christianity was simply Judaism to which had been added belief in Jesus as the Messiah. They maintained that the Gentiles should be circumcised and conform to the Jewish legal system in addition to their acceptance of Jesus Christ. The Jerusalem Council convened to settle the question (Acts 15). The council ruled against the claims of these men. However, not all seemed willing to accept the decisions of the council. A strong party developed, which continued to insist that Gentiles should accept Judaism

along with Christianity. A group of zealots from this party upset the churches in Galatia, a situation that gave rise to the Epistle of Paul to the Galatians, in which he clearly set forth that the system of Judaism was now obsolete.

This same transition from Judaism to Christianity is Paul's theme in this present verse. Judaism, with its involved system of commands and decrees, was abolished. With their acceptance of Christ and the removal of this barrier, Gentiles who were "far off" were "made nigh."

But the coming to an end of Judaism did not mean the abrogation of all the laws that God had given to the Jews. The ceremonial law which pointed to Christ naturally came to an end when Christ fulfilled its types. Jewish civil law had already largely passed away with the passing of the nation's sovereignty. But the moral precepts, which are a transcript of the character of God, are as eternal as God Himself and can never be abrogated. In all his teaching concerning the end of the Jewish legal system, Paul made emphatically clear that the moral law was not abrogated (see on Rom. 3:31). When speaking of the end of circumcision Paul was careful to add, "but the keeping of the commandments of God [is everything]" (see on 1 Cor. 7:19). See further on Gal. 2:16.

Contained. This word is supplied. The clause may be translated, "law of commandments consisting of decrees [or, "expressed in decrees"]."

Ordinances. Gr. *dogmata*, "decrees," "commands," "enactments." In Luke 2:1 the word is used of the decree from Caesar Augustus, "that all the world should be taxed," and in Acts 17:7, of the decrees of Caesar in general. In Acts 16:4 *dogmata* describes the decrees of the Jerusalem Council. In the present verse *dogmata* describes the decrees of Jewish law.

To make. Gr. *ktizō*, "to create," as the word is translated in v. 10.

1

Of twain. Literally, "of the two," that is, Jew and Gentile.

One new man. This means more than harmony established between them. The Greek word for "new" means new in quality rather than in time. Here is a *new* person, of different quality from either of the two elements composing it (cf. on ch. 4:24).

Making peace. These words explain the phrase, "he is our peace," of v. 14.

16. Reconcile. Gr. *apokatalassō*, an intensified form of *katalassō* (see on Rom. 5:10).

In one body. That is, the "new man" of v. 15 and the "body" of ch. 1:23, both referring to the church, the body of which Christ is the head (ch. 1:22).

By the cross. This is the only time the cross is mentioned in this epistle. It is spoken of as the means of reconciliation and the place where the enmity was destroyed. The cross is the great leveler, the common denominator for all men, because Christ died for all, and there is no other means of salvation.

Slain the enmity. In the sense that Christ's death brought the hostility to an end (cf. on Col. 1:20). Discord in the family, party strife, national animosity, denominational

¹Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (Eph 1:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

jealousies, and personal tensions and conflicts—all these are healed when human beings become sons and daughters of God, and thus “one in Christ.”

Thereby. Literally, “in it,” or “in him.”

17. Came. This probably refers to His coming through the Spirit after His ascension. Through the Spirit the gospel of peace was proclaimed to both Gentile and Jew.

Preached peace. Peace and good will toward men is always the outcome of preaching the gospel. Compare the phrase “he is our peace” (see on v. 14). He is not only the assurance of our peace, He *is* our peace.

Afar off, and ... nigh. See on v. 13. There is probably an allusion to Isa. 57:19. The Jews needed reconciliation as much as the Gentiles did, for while they had a knowledge of God, they were separated from Him by their traditions and their sins (Isa. 59:2; Gal. 1:14; 4:9; 1 Peter 1:18). The rending of the Temple veil at the death of Christ (Matt. 27:51) not only signified that type had met Antitype, and thus the ceremonial system had come to its end, but also symbolized that the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down (see EW 209). Compare Rom. 3:30.

18. Access. Gr. *prosagōgē*, “approach,” “introduction” (see on Rom. 5:2). Jesus said of Himself: “I am the door: by me if any man enter in, he shall be saved” (John 10:9). The true aim of all religion is to find access to God. The three persons in the Godhead are all presented are all presented in this verse: Him (Christ), the Spirit, the Father.

By one Spirit. Or, “in one Spirit.” There is not one Spirit for the Jews and another for the Gentiles.

The Father. This word would be particularly rich in meaning to those who were “afar off.” To the Gentiles, weary of their deities and seeking the “unknown God” (Acts 17:23), the idea of a loving Father would present a strong appeal.

19. Strangers and foreigners. Compare v. 12. The strangers (*xenoi*) were aliens, but the foreigners (*paroikoi*) were half-aliens, residents having no rights of citizenship and more properly called “sojourners” (see Acts 7:6, 29).

Fellowcitizens. The Gentiles who accept Christ have the right to all the privileges of citizenship in the new commonwealth (cf. v. 12) of the Christian church.

Saints. See on ch. 1:1. These now include both Jewish and Gentile Christians, forming the “body” of chs. 1:23; 2:16.

Of the household. That is, members of the family, kinsfolk. They have the privileges of protection, sustenance, and fellowship (cf. Gal. 6:10). God is at once King of the citizens and Father of the family. They are no longer sojourners or guests; they are now permanent residents (Eph. 3:15).

20. Foundation. The figure changes, in a manner characteristic of Paul, from the persons in the house to the structure itself. The imagery differs from that in 1 Cor. 3:11, where Christ is presented as the foundation.

Apostles and prophets. This phrase may be regarded as in apposition to “foundation.” The passage would then mean, “the foundation, which is the apostles and prophets.” Some limit the term “prophets” here to NT prophets (Eph. 3:5; 4:11; cf. 1 Cor. 12:10). Others believe that OT prophets are referred to, in that they actually laid the foundations of the work of the Messiah. The prophets to whom God revealed the riches of His grace and the apostles, the special evangelists of this grace, constitute the foundation. Other Christians make up the structure of the building. This passage does not say that the

church was to be founded on one apostle, Peter, but upon all of them, with Christ, the Chief Cornerstone.

Chief corner stone. This expression is found only here and in 1 Peter 2:6, where the building is described as made of living stones. For the purpose of the figure, the cornerstone is viewed as that which holds together an edifice. Christ holds together the various parts of the spiritual house, giving shape and unity to it. The metaphor is drawn from Ps. 118:22 and was applied by Christ to Himself (Matt. 21:42).

21. In whom. That is, in Jesus Christ. This expression, the key phrase of the epistle (see on ch. 1:1, expresses a mystic but real experience, as does the phrase “in the Lord” at the end of the verse. Christian growth takes place by our being “in him.”

Fitly framed together. Gr. *sunarmologeō*, or, “to join together fitly.” The word is translated “fitly joined together” in ch. 4:16, its only other occurrence in the NT. The church is not a pile of stones come together by accident; it has form and coherence. Each stone has its proper place. The stability of the structure depends on careful planning.

Groweth. As new members are added to the church.

An holy temple. Or, “a holy sanctuary.” As the sanctuary was peculiarly the place of God’s presence and manifestation, so the church of God is the temple in which He dwells. Everything that is touched by the hand and presence of God is hallowed, so that His sanctuary, or “holy temple,” is wherever He is.

22. Ye also. That is, the Gentiles. Note the contrast between the experience here described and their former experience, “dead in trespasses and sins” (v. 1).

Are builded together. Or, “are being built together,” indicating a continuing process, as new accessions are made to the church.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 1 AA 203, 209; Ev 137, 288; FE 332; MH 85, 163; SC 43; TM 440; 4T 354; 6T 66, 280, 426; 7T 243; 8T 31, 196, 203; 9T 137, 143
- 2 TM 16, 73; 9T 21
- 4 DA 517; 6T 480; 8T 62; 9T 50
- 4–66T 300
- 4–7ML 100; 5T 730
- 4–8COL 98
- 4–22TM 387
- 6 AA 46; CS 163; MM 46; TM 124; 6T 479; 7T 32, 226; 8T 196; 9T 188; WM 169
- 6, 7 Ed 308
- 7 DA 26, 249; Ev 628; PK 314
- 8 Ed 253; GW 161; SC 61; TM 148, 387
- 9 COL 401; CS 341
- 10 FE 425
- 12 SL 82; 4T 568; 7T 238; 9T 33, 256
- 12, 13 AA 175
- 13, 14 COL 386; PK 370
- 14 AA 14, 19, 136, 161; DA 622; EW 209; MB 42, 47; AH 25; SR 285, 303; 9T 181, 190
- 17 Ev 46, 326, 408; FE 273
- 18–225T 266
- 19 AA 139, 175; PP 447
- 19, 20 AA 176

19–22AA 596; 9T 180
20 DA 597; 3T 387
20, 21 PK 36
20–22Ev 573; GC 416; 5T 291
21 MB 150; 4T 258; 7T 131
21, 22 DA 162; TM 387
22 DA 209

CHAPTER 3

5 *The hidden mystery*, 6 *that the Gentiles should be saved*, 3 *was made known to Paul by revelation*: 8 *and to him was that grace given*, that 9 *he should preach it*. 13 *He desireth them not to faint for his tribulation*, 14 *and prayeth* 19 *that they may perceive the great love of Christ toward them*.

1. For this cause. This phrase evidently refers to the immediately preceding statement concerning the Gentiles who are no longer strangers and foreigners but who have been built into a holy temple, as well as more generally to the whole purpose of God. Thus Paul tactfully invites their attention to some say. On the importance of the instruction in this chapter see TM 391.

I Paul. Compare 2 Cor. 10:1; Gal. 5:2; Col. 1:23, 24; Philemon 19. The emphasis is doubtless because of the following statement concerning his great commission. He himself is amazed that he should be the instrument of God in making known the great redemptive work he has thus far been describing.

Prisoner. Concerning Paul's imprisonment at this time see p. 30. Paul often referred to his imprisonment, in fact, three times in this epistle (cf. chs. 4:1; 6:20). It is better to be in prison for a good cause than to be free and failing in duty and privileges.

Of Jesus Christ. That is, a prisoner belonging to Christ, or one for Christ's sake.

For you Gentiles. Paul was in prison because of his labors for the Gentiles (Acts 21:28), particularly for his maintaining that they were equally heirs to the promises. It was thus he had gained the hatred of his own countrymen. His breadth of vision leaped across all national barriers.

2. If ye have heard. Here begins a digression that lasts perhaps to v. 14, where the words "for this cause" (v. 1) are repeated to resume the original train of thought. In this digression Paul deals with two closely related subjects: The revelation of the hidden mystery that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, and his own special call to apostleship to make known to them this mystery.

The uncertainty expressed in the clause, "if ye have heard," has been set forth as evidence that the letter was not addressed to the Ephesians. Paul would not, it is asserted, speak thus to a group among whom he had labored for three years. Several explanations have been offered: (1) That the statement is a delicately half-ironical reference to a thing that is not doubtful; (2) that the letter was intended, not for the Ephesians only, but for the churches in Asia generally; (3) that inasmuch as some five years had passed since Paul had last visited Ephesus, the composition of the church had changed to the extent that Paul chose to speak with less definiteness. He assumed that the new members had heard what he had told the older members. For a discussion of this problem see p. 993.

Dispensation. See on ch. 1:10. The essential idea of this word is stewardship (Eph. 3:2; Col. 1:25).

Grace. For a definition of “grace” see on Rom. 3:24. Paul exalts his office and humbles himself as an instrument, or steward. When the Master puts us to work He thereby honors us.

To you-ward. That is, to the Gentiles (see Acts 9:15; 22:21). His career and lifework consisted of entire commitment to the service of others (Acts 26:17, 18; Rom. 1:5).

3. By revelation. See on Gal. 1:11, 12; cf. AA 386. Paul had a profound sense of his calling. He was an apostle, but not one left to his own devisings. He was instructed, commissioned, enlightened; and this revelation accounted for his thorough knowledge of the mysteries of the gospel.

Mystery. Gr. *mustērion* (see on Rom. 11:25; cf. on Eph. 1:9).

As I wrote afore. The reference is probably not to a previous epistle but to what Paul had written earlier in this epistle (chs. 1:9–13; 2:11; etc.). We might say, “as I have written above.” However, some argue that he is referring to an earlier letter.

4. Understand. Or, “perceive,” “comprehend with the intellect.”

Knowledge. Or, “insight,” “understanding.” Paul is not asserting his own intelligence, but the fact that God had granted him certain insight that could be verified by the spiritual-minded readers of his letter. He is assuring such readers that he was fully informed on the matters about which he was writing, and thus confidence in him would not be misplaced. Every witness for God may have this conviction that his message is true and valid.

Mystery. Gr. *mustērion* (see on Rom. 11:25; cf. on Eph. 1:9).

5. Other ages. Literally, “other generations.” Every generation has had its revelation, but never to the degree and form that the generations since the time of Christ have had. Revelation was, in a sense, progressive, calculated on the one hand to serve the best interests of each generation, limited on the other by the willful ignorance of the people, until the full flood of revelation appeared in the person of Jesus Christ.

Sons of men. Mankind in general, all men. The phrase translates a common Hebrew idiom.

Now revealed. The mystery can be known only as God reveals it. God is not trying to keep it secret. He desires to make it known. For this meaning of “mystery” see on Rom. 11:25.

Holy apostles and prophets. Compare on ch. 2:20. The use of “holy” in this connection is of interest. Critics have questioned Paul’s use of this word, with regard to apostles, of which he was one, but the believers are also called holy (Deut. 7:6; Mark 6:20; Col. 1:22; Heb. 3:1).

By the Spirit. See on 2 Peter 1:21.

6. Fellowheirs. Compare Rom. 8:17; Gal. 3:29; 4:7; Heb. 11:9. None of the blessings of salvation were to be withheld from the Gentiles; thus would be fulfilled the promise to Abraham that in him all families of the earth would be blessed (Gen. 12:2, 3).

Their national history shows clearly that the Jews did not comprehend the extent of the plan for the Gentiles and the universality of the gospel; hence the Gentiles remained in comparative ignorance. However, throughout the OT there were intimations of the glory that God intended to reveal (Gen. 18:18; Ps. 22:27; etc.; see Vol. IV, pp. 26–30).

Same body. See ch. 2:16. To bring together in one body those who for centuries have been separated by fears and animosities is the avowed purpose of God through Jesus Christ. All historical differences of race, nation, and social status are to be obliterated, not

by political unification, but by the overwhelming power of love and a common allegiance to the person of Christ. All of men's worthy but forlorn efforts to harmonize their differences inevitably fail because they are not directed according to the basic principles of the kingdom of God, the principles of mutual respect and love. This, Paul came to announce to Jew and Gentile alike.

Partakers. Literally, "joint sharers." The word thus translated occurs only here and in ch. 5:7.

His promise. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading "the promise." That is, the promise of salvation.

In Christ. The key phrase (see on ch. 1:1). Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading "in Christ Jesus." All the precious promises of God to Israel, and now to the Gentiles also, were fulfilled in Christ (2 Cor. 1:20). The phrase "in Christ by the gospel" refers not only to the "promise" but also to "fellowheirs" and to "partakers."

By the gospel. Or, "by means of the gospel." Compare the statement, "I have begotten you through the gospel" (1 Cor. 4:15; cf. Rom. 10:8–15; 16:25, 26). The news that men need not be lost, that they may be joined in one body to Christ, to their eternal salvation, is the gospel.

7. Minister. Gr. *diakonos* (see on Mark 9:35). The word suggests activity, subordination, and service.

Grace. Here, a specific gift for the purpose of fulfilling his ministry and apostleship (see on Rom. 3:24). Paul was ever grateful for his privilege and call.

Effectual working. Compare on ch. 1:19. Paul's energetic labor was the result of a power that had been given to him. The divine gift of grace was accompanied by a divine energy.

8. Less than the least. Compare 1 Cor. 15:9, 10; 2 Cor. 11:30; 1 Tim. 1:12–16. The recognition of God's grace and favor always brought thoughts of humility to Paul's mind. He was ever sensitive to the fact that he had been a persecutor of the saints. Therefore his appreciation of the greatness of his calling and of his personal inadequacy was ever fresh before him. Paul always seemed to be amazed that God could take one so faulty, one who had been a rebel, and make him a minister of His grace. He felt himself not only less than prophets and apostles but less than any of the saints. Those who have the greatest access to divine grace will be the most humble. Only thus are they properly equipped to serve.

Nevertheless, the sentiments aroused in Paul by his reflections on his past life must be understood in relation to his assertion that he had lived "in all good conscience before God" (Acts 23:1), and his exhortation to his converts to be "followers" (literally, "mimics") of him (1 Cor. 4:16; 11:1; Phil. 3:17). Humility is no negative quality; it is consonant with the knowledge of personal victory over sin and growth in grace.

Among the Gentiles. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading "to the Gentiles."

Unsearchable riches. Compare Job 5:9; 9:10; 11:7; Rom. 11:33. The spiritual bounties of God we can see only in part, for we "see through a glass, darkly" (1 Cor. 13:12). There is a sufficiency in Christ that cannot be exhausted, for He not only possesses unsearchable riches—He Himself is the riches. And these riches are not unsearchable because they are hidden or remote, but because they are so abundant. He is rich in His grace to the Gentiles, His love to sinners, and His redeeming activity. This means that in Christ is to be found the answer to any and every human problem that can arise. His resources are inexhaustible. No wonder that Paul, with this concept and

conviction, declared: "I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified" (1 Cor. 2:2).

9. Make all men see. Literally, "enlighten [or, "illuminate"] all [men]." The gospel brings to light the mysteries that were hidden (vs. 3–5). Through the gospel the whole human family, Gentiles and Jews, was to see the purposes of God. Any church or any preaching that does not accomplish this is failing in its mission. Compare ch. 1:18 (margin), "the eyes of your heart being enlightened."

Fellowship. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading "dispensation," meaning "plan," "administration," or "stewardship" (see on ch. 1:10; cf. ch. 3:2). The wisdom of God is to be shown by the church, the steward of the mystery. The hidden plan is now being manifested.

From the beginning of the world. Literally, "from the ages." The plan of redemption was laid before the foundation of the world (see on ch. 1:4). The historical outworking of the plan was an expression of God's eternal goodness.

In God. Or, "by God." There is slight textual evidence (cf. p. 10) to support the reading "by God."

Created all things. Probably Paul adds this thought of creative power to impress his hearers with the greatness of the theme. Creation and re-creation are always closely linked in the gospel, and both are accomplished in and through the Son (see John 1:3; Col 1:20; Heb. 1:2). The God who created all things is equally powerful to accomplish His purposes in redemption.

By Jesus Christ. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the omission of this phrase. However, this truth is abundantly set forth elsewhere (John 1:3; Col. 1:20; etc.).

10. Principalities and powers. See on ch. 1:21. The universal purpose in redemption includes the vindication of the name and character of God, which have been challenged by Satan and questioned by angels (cf. on ch. 1:6). This is the greatest spectacle that heavenly intelligences can contemplate (cf. 1 Cor. 4:9). What must the course of history look like to them, as from their vantage point they can observe the interplay of forces and events?

In heavenly places. See on ch. :3.

Might be known. Rather, "might be made known," "might be declared."

By the church. Or, "through the church," "by means of the church." The church was intended to be a living demonstration of God's wisdom, even as a recovered patient is a witness to the skill of the physician. Indeed, it may be said that the church is not so much an agent of the power and wisdom of God as it is a proof or evidence of it. The church makes its witness best when it draws upon all the gifts of all its members.

Manifold wisdom. Especially as manifested in the work of redemption. The wisdom of God is also shown in the manifold forms in the material world, in the complexities of the human mind, and in the innumerable methods He uses to reach men and effect their salvation. The full extent of this wisdom will not be understood until the plan of salvation is ended.

11. Eternal purpose. Literally, "the purpose of the ages." Scripture and life alike tell of the outworking of a divine purpose. God created the world not in vain, and although for a time His plans are hindered, they will ultimately triumph.

Christ Jesus our Lord. See ch. 1:10, 22, 23. Paul reminds his readers that the historic Jesus whom they acknowledged as Lord was the Christ of the eternal purpose of God to

effect man's salvation and to vindicate His character. The unity His purpose calls for requires complete submission of each believer's will to its Lord and Master. The unity is like to that which a musical conductor expects from the different instruments of his orchestra. The church that cannot fuse into unity and a common devotion to its Lord faces certain defeat and rejection. Paul's argument is (1) that the will of God has been revealed to us, (2) that that will is being worked out, (3) and that it will result in the restoration of harmony to God's disrupted universe.

12. Boldness. Gr. *parrēsia*, "freedom of speech" (see on Acts 4:13).

Access. See on ch. 2:18. Adam had that free intercourse with God at first, but, having lost it, he hid himself among the trees of the garden, because he could no longer face God with frankness and a clear conscience. The effect of redemption is to restore to man a new and bold access to God without fear or restriction, and without the need of any intermediaries such as priests or saints, or ritual. God is immediately accessible to the trusting soul, through the merits of Christ.

The faith of him. Meaning, doubtless, our faith in Him. We come to Christ in the first instance by faith, and we continue, by faith, to live the life that is called for. We can come to God with boldness only on the basis that we have faith in Christ as our mediator. He has been the only One to bridge the gulf that has separated man from God since the entrance of sin (Isa. 59:1, 2).

13. Wherefore. Because the Gentiles now belong to the body of Christ, because the eternal purpose is being fulfilled, because we have free access to God, and because such great and marvelous things have occurred, Paul makes a delicate request of his readers; namely, that they be not too much distressed over his sufferings that have come on account of his bringing to them the blessings of the gospel.

Faint. Gr. *egkakeō*, "to grow tired," "to become discouraged." Paul may mean, "I ask [God] that I may not faint . . .," or "I ask [you] not to faint." The latter sense fits the context and Paul's general style better. The apostle in prison was anxious that his flock be not disturbed by his plight. He was concerned, not so much for his own sake, but for theirs. They might conclude that what he had preached had little saving power in it; that the God in whom Paul trusted was unmindful of His servant's fate; that they themselves might soon face similar trials, as indeed they would. This is a touching instance of the apostle's solicitude for his children in the faith. Paul well knew that tribulation is a test for those who look upon it as well as for those who undergo it. Suffering courageously borne is doubly glorious when both onlookers and sufferers draw virtue from it.

Your glory. Paul, like a good pastor, identifies himself with his flock. If he finds glory in his tribulation, they will share it with him. He is suffering on account of his exalted office as apostle and ambassador of God, and the Ephesians are the fruit of that apostleship. Hence they are entitled to reflect the glory. When one part of the body of Christ is in pain, the whole body suffers in sympathy.

14. For this cause. See on v. 1. The thought that was interrupted in the first verse is here resumed, following an extended parenthesis.

Bow my knees. For kneeling as a posture in prayer see Luke 22:41; Acts 7:60; 20:36; 21:5; Rom. 14:11; Phil. 2:10.

Of our Lord Jesus Christ. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this phrase.

15. *The whole family.* There has been much discussion as to whether this phrase should be translated, “the whole family,” or “every family.” The Greek may be rendered either way, although normally a construction such as appears here would be translated “every” and not “the whole.” However, a number of exceptions may be cited in which a construction such as is used here clearly stands for “the whole,” or “the entire” (Matt. 3:15; 28:18; Acts 1:21; etc.). A notable exception is Eph. 2:21, where the same construction is rendered “all the building,” or “the whole structure” (RSV), whereas in ch. 3:15 the RSV reads “every family.” Since the Greek here is not clearly definitive, the context must decide as to the translation to be adopted. Paul appears to be speaking of unity and seems to conceive of the beings in heaven and the saints on the earth as one large family. If the translation “every family” is adopted, it seems necessary to conceive of several families in heaven. Such the Scriptures do not describe. It seems better therefore to adopt the reading “the whole family,” which conveys the sense of unity and wholeness of the community of God, the Father of all, a theme to which the apostle frequently reverts.

16. *Riches of his glory.* Compare ch. 1:18. This is the standard by which God bestows His blessings upon mankind, hence the limitless resources available to the child of God. Man measures by his own weakness and insignificance; God by His unlimited riches and glory. Paul is not satisfied that his converts should become merely nominal Christians. He wants them to receive abundantly of the graces, to plumb the depths and scale the heights of spiritual life, to partake of the glorious riches of the kingdom of God.

Strengthened with might. The might that strengthens is the power of God. The power is conveyed through the operation of the Holy Spirit. The same power that converts men must continue in them if there is to be Christian growth. Here is where many Christians fail. They do not recognize that spiritual endurance requires as much of the grace of God as did the initial conversion. As the physical strength is increased by food and the intellectual life by thought, so the spiritual life is sustained by the immediate presence and power of the Holy Spirit.

In the inner man. The Greek suggests power entering into and remaining there. The vital spiritual powers within a man have not sprung from his own nature; he has nothing of his own to offer, nothing of his own of which to boast.

17. *Dwell.* Gr. *katoikeō*, “to inhabit,” “to abide,” “to be at home,” “to settle down,” “to abide.” The idea of permanency is now added to that of strengthening (v. 16). Christ is not an occasional visitor, but abides in the heart, a constantly available power for enlightenment and purification (cf. John 14:23; Rev. 3:20).

By faith. It is faith that opens up the heart of Christ. Faith is a confident trust in God and His promises, and is a continuously sustaining principle of life (see on Rom. 4:3).

Rooted and grounded. These two distinct images are used frequently by Paul and other scriptural writers (Ps. 1:3; Jer. 17:8; Col. 1:23; 2:7). Paul often combines metaphors in order to reinforce his point (1 Cor. 3:9).

In love. In the Greek these words are in the emphatic beginning position. Thus they may be understood as connected with the first part of v. 17, reading literally, “that Christ may dwell through faith in your hearts in love.” Or they may be understood as connected with the words “rooted and grounded,” as the reading “rooted and grounded in love” implies. Love that is “rooted” goes down deep into the soil of the soul, engaging all the faculties of the mind, while love that is “grounded” is the firm foundation on which all

our relationships exist. There is no argument against love of this kind, for there is nothing greater (1 Cor. 13). Love springs directly from the experience of possessing the indwelling Christ, and becomes the rooting and grounding of the unity between God and man, and between man and his fellow man.

18. *May be able.* The subject to be grasped is beyond ordinary comprehension; therefore Paul prays that his hearers may receive a special enabling power for the attainment of it.

To comprehend. Literally, “to seize”; metaphorically, “to perceive.”

All saints. See on ch. 1:1. There are certain spiritual transactions that take place only in the individual heart, but there are other matters that belong to the community of God, and this comprehension of the love of Christ is one of them. It is the common possession that binds believers together.

Breadth. Paul does not state to what the dimensions mentioned in this clause apply. Commentators have given various interpretations. Perhaps the simplest explanation is that Paul breaks off his sentence as though overwhelmed by the magnitude of the subject he is contemplating. He is simply yet profoundly moved, as he contemplates the mystery—the indwelling Christ, the love of God, the unity of the body of Christ, or specifically the love of Christ (v. 19). It is as though on some starry night the spectator looks out on God’s unbounded universe in all directions, lost in wonder.

19. *Love of Christ.* Here, are apparently, not our love for Christ, but His love for us.

Which passeth knowledge. Christ’s love is beyond the knowledge of human kind because it is infinite and free, never exhausted, and ever presenting new fields of understanding. It is the fountain of our own growing experience of love (1 John 4:19). Men have but touched with their finger tips the power for living to be found in experiencing fully the love of Christ.

Fulness of God. See on ch. 1:23. This is the glorious consummation to the work of the indwelling Christ in the life. The church, like a vessel, is to be filled to the brim with heavenly grace, so that the individual members composing the body of Christ exhibit or reflect something of the “fulfulness of God.” Paul is presenting a most exalted view of the nature of man and of his possibilities for growth in grace. Man was made in the image of God. He was given images of God. He was given capabilities of development and the high privilege of becoming a partaker of the “divine nature” (2 Peter 1:4). The blessings of God are not parceled out parsimoniously. They lead to an ever-increasing comprehension of the mind of God, to a filling up of the void and empty places in men’s lives with spiritual power. Since it is Christ in whom God’s fullness is actually found (Col. 2:9), the divine “fulfulness” comes to man by the indwelling of Christ in the heart (see Eph. 3:17).

20. *Unto him.* The whole matter that Paul has been presenting so far in the epistle is summed up in a magnificent doxology (vs. 20, 21). Praise of God springs readily from the converted heart. There are many doxologies in Scripture (Rom. 16:25–27; 1 Tim. 6:15, 16; Rev. 1:6), each with its distinctive thought. At this point the apostle is overwhelmed with a sense of God’s indescribable power and His unlimited love to men.

Able. Paul frequently emphasizes the ability of God to perform what He has set out to accomplish (Rom. 4:21; 11:23; 2 Cor. 9:8). He sees this as a great encouragement to the weary saint, who is assured that he is not resting his faith on some weak and faulty object.

Exceeding abundantly. Gr. *huperekperissou*, “entirely above all bounds.” Paul is fond of compound words. Here he points to a superabundance, above and beyond fullness, and overflowing (cf. 1 Thess. 3:10; 5:13). This abundance is particularly manifest at the time of deepest need (cf. Rom. 5:20), and the believer has but to lay hold of it.

Ask. Rather, “ask for, for ourselves.” The whole expression doubtless refers particularly to spiritual graces, the “fulness of God” (v. 19). Paul is giving added stress to the thought of the superabundance of God’s grace and giving. There are resources of spiritual power available to us beyond our farthest thought. We do not tap them as we might. Compare our Lord’s admonition (see on Matt. 7:7).

Power. See on Eph. 3:16; cf. Eph. 1:19, 20; Col. 1:29.

21. Glory. Literally, “the glory.” To God alone belongs the credit, recognition, and honor for the saving work of grace. There is no place for the assumption of virtue and glory on the part of the church or its members.

In the church by Christ Jesus. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “in the church and in Jesus Christ.” The reasons, then, for praising God are found in these two places: in the church, because there His glory is reflected; in Christ, because He is the head of the body, the church.

Throughout ... end. Literally, “unto all the generations of the age of the ages,” that is, to all eternity.

Amen. See on Matt. 5:18.

So ends the apostle’s prayer and the first part of the epistle. Amazing glory and majesty embodied in the promises of God to His erring yet hopeful ones has been the theme, beyond human language to express. It leaves the heart uplifted, the spirit chastened, and gives a living hope for the coming of the kingdom of God in its fullness.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

- 1 5T 730
- 1–21TM 391
- 3 AA 302
- 5–11AA 159
- 6 AA 19; DA 402
- 6, 7 2T 609
- 8 AA 134, 567, 600; GC 471; SL 17, 84; 5T 74, 730, 731
- 8–106T 13
- 8–11TM 292
- 9 AA 527; GW 186; 2T 609
- 9, 10 ML 368
- 10 AA 9; Ed 308
- 10, 11 DA 26
- 11 COL 397
- 13–21LS 439; RC 71
- 14 GW 178; PK 48; SL 84
- 14, 15 AA 11; DA 25; 6T 366
- 14–19MH 426; 8T 289; 9T 183
- 15 Ed 306; GC 677
- 16 DA 200; GW 262; 8T 132

16–19CH 593; GC 476; SL 84; 2T 522

16–21FE 180

17 CT 223; Ev 361

17–19AA 334; TM 387; 3T 213

18, 19 AA 469; COL 129; DA 670; FE 178; MB 34, 76; 2T 213, 266; 5T 264, 740; 7T 214
18–208T 335

19 AA 308; PP 64; 2T 215; 3T 467; 5T 105

19, 20 GW 262

20 COL 147, 397; CSW 108; DA 200, 249, 421, 679; Ed 307; GC 351; GW 38; MB 20;
MM 203; PP 554; TM 208; 5T 50; 7T 273

CHAPTER 4

1 *He exhorteth to unity, 7 and declareth that God therefore giveth divers 11 gifts unto men, that his church might be 13 edified, and 16 grown up in Christ. 18 He calleth them from the impurity of the Gentiles, 1 to put on the new man, 25 to cast off lying, and 29 corrupt communication.*

1. *I therefore.* This verse begins what may be called the practical section of the epistle, although the apostle Paul did not think of doctrine and practice as separate branches of the faith. Theory and application are interwoven in the texture of his presentation of the great theme of the unity of believers. But in this section special exhortations are given concerning Christian duties and privileges, in view of the grace that has been received and of the responsibilities that fellow believers have to one another. The stress is here placed on the effects rather than on the causes of spiritual living.

Prisoner. See on 3:1.

Walk worthy. See on Eph. 2:2 cf. Eph. 2:10; 5:8, 15; Col. 1:10. It is impossible to be entirely worthy of our calling, but one may be continually under the leading of God. God has not called us because we are worthy, for worthiness follows the call. No man would ever be called of God if it depended on his worthiness. When the prodigal son cried out that he was not worthy to be called his father's son, he was expressing the conviction of all repentant sinners (Luke 15:19). The Ephesians, who were once aliens and foreigners, but who have now been united into one body with God's formerly chosen people and have received of the promises, are called upon to exhibit certain visible evidences of that gracious change. To walk the Christian way means more than concern about separate acts of outward conduct; it relates to an inner condition and attitude that provides the motive force behind the acts.

2. *Lowliness.* Gr. *tapeinophrosunē*, "humility of mind" (see on Acts 20:19). The idea of "lowliness" has not been held in high esteem among non-Christian peoples. In non-Biblical writings *tapeinophrosunē* and its related words signified abasement of spirit, but Christianity elevated these to mean unselfish humility. The Master described Himself, in connection with the yoke that His followers were to assume, as being "lowly in heart" (Matt. 11:29). The command to walk with all lowliness is a hard saying to the unconverted heart, for it runs counter to every natural impulse of the human spirit.

Meekness. Gr. *praotēs* (see Gal. 5:23; cf. on Matt. 5:5, where the related adjective *prais* is used). The man who is meek accepts the injuries done to him by others, submits to the trials of life. This quality is essential to the unity of the church; without it division

soon appears. Meekness, being the denial of self-assertion even under provocation, cannot exist without lowliness.

Longsuffering. Gr. *makrothumia* (see on Rom. 2:4; Gal. 5:22). Patience under any and all conditions and for all reasons is the essence of long-suffering. It is a divine quality that God has exhibited throughout the millenniums of the sinful rebellion of angels and men, and it comes to man as a fruit of the Spirit. The word is frequently used to describe divine patience (Rom. 2:4; 1 Tim. 1:16; 2 Peter 3:15).

Forbearing. Gr. *apechō*, “to bear with.”

In love. The quality of forbearance is manifested only by a heart that loves.

3. Endeavouring. Or, “earnestly striving.”

Unity of the Spirit. Paul is assuming that this condition of oneness, given by the Spirit, already exists, and he is urging that it be maintained by the exercise of the virtues he has enumerated. Now he proceeds to seven particulars in which this unity consists, a unity of which peace is the “bond,” or “band.”

4. One body. See on chs. 1:23; 2:15, 16. There is a sevenfold repetition of the word “one” in ch. 4:4–6. Unity is the apostle’s theme in these verses. There are many members, but one body (see on 1 Cor. 12:12–14). The Christian is not a solitary pilgrim; he belongs to a vital organism, the family of God. This unit replaces the state, the club, and even the human family as the supreme object of his attachment.

One Spirit. This is the same Spirit referred to in v. 3, the same Spirit who was the regenerating power recommended to Nicodemus (John 3:5). All the gifts, fruits, and graces of the Christian life come from the Spirit’s dwelling in the personal lives of believers and thus in the church. The Spirit dispels the divisions within a man’s own life, the inner disharmonies that make of so many lives veritable battlefields. Disunity is a certain sign that the Holy Spirit is absent.

One hope. Hope sprang up with God’s appeal to men’s hearts—the hope of salvation and the appearance of the Lord (Titus 2:13). It is the hope of the final consummation of the kingdom that gives a substantial basis for peace and joy, courage and good cheer. The Spirit validates this hope (cf. Eph. 1:13, 14), which, in turn, unifies believers and becomes, indeed, a “lively hope” (1 Peter 1:3). Such a hope necessarily leads to the transformed life, for “every man that hath this hope in him purifieth himself” (1 John 3:3).

Of your calling. That is, belonging to your calling as inseparably involved with it. They have hope by the very fact of their calling.

5. One Lord. See on 1 Cor. 8:6. Here is the supreme object of loyalty. Those who give complete submission and allegiance to the same Lord are not at enmity with one another. He is Lord by creation and by re-creation, and all authority rests with Him. Utter surrender to Him is a requirement, but such a surrender may be the Christian’s greatest joy. “We do know that we know him, if we keep his commandments” (1 John 2:3).

One faith. Paul seems here to be speaking of subjective faith in Christ as a personal Saviour rather than of faith as a creedal system (cf. on Rom. 1:5). There is only one means of salvation, namely, faith (see on Gal. 2:16). Both Jew and Gentile enter the “body” (Eph. 4:4) by the same channel (Rom. 3:29, 30).

One baptism. Baptism by water aptly symbolizes death and resurrection. Also, it signifies cleansing and separation, and is a public announcement of union with the body

of Christ. Those thus initiated into the visible church grow together into the likeness of Christ's death and resurrection (Rom. 6:3–5).

6. One God and Father of all. See on 1 Cor. 8:6. The common Father is the source of all unity. The greatest fact that the human heart can discover is that God is a father who can be trusted, one who is a friend to man. Through the ages men have yearned for someone to whom they might turn in what appeared to be an unfriendly world.

Above all. He is sovereign in His own house.

Through all. God is omnipresent (see on Ps. 139).

In you all. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) omitting the pronoun, but may also be cited for the reading “us.” Omitting any pronoun brings the phrase into parallelism with the two preceding phrases and does no violence to Paul's meaning.

7. Unto every one. There is manifest order and design in the allotment of work and talent to each person (cf. Rom. 12:6). Every gift contributes its value to the unity of the church. No room is left for pride on the part of those who have large gifts, because more will be expected of them; neither is there place for jealousy on the part of those who have received lesser talents, because they are responsible for developing only what they have (see COL 327; MYP 309; 2T 245; 9T 37).

Eph. 4:7–13 deals with diversity of gifts within the church. Paul makes a fuller statement on diversity of gifts in 1 Cor. 12. Compare Jesus' lesson in the parable of the Talents (Matt. 25:14–30). There is variation not only in the supernatural endowments that God gives to men for special purposes and occasions but in the ordinary spiritual capacities of different persons.

8. He saith. Or, “it saith.” The quotation is from Ps. 68:18. For the meaning of the original quotation see on Ps. 68:18; see Introduction to Ps. 68.

Ascended. Paul applies the words of the psalmist to the ascension of Christ. He points out that it is the ascension of Christ that is the guarantee of His ability to give the gifts of the Spirit to men (cf. on 1 Cor. 15:12–22).

Led captivity captive. Here doubtless meaning, “led captive a host of captives.” In Psalms the reference is probably to the captive foes of Israel's king. Here it may be understood as referring to those held captive by death who were raised with Christ at His resurrection (Matt. 27:51–53; cf. EW 184, 189, 190; DA 786). The chain of death had been broken; the captives of Satan had been captured by the power of Christ.

Gave. The Hebrew and the LXX of Ps. 68:18 read “received.” As an inspired writer Paul is adapting the psalmist's statement to the work of Christ in distributing spiritual gifts following His triumphal entry into heaven.

9. Ascended ... descended. The ascent of Christ implies a preceding descent (cf. John 3:13). Not only did the Son of God descend to the earth; He touched the very depths of human experience, thus making His ascension to the throne of glory all the more glorious.

First. Textual evidence is divided (cf. p. 10) between omitting and retaining this word.

Lower parts of the earth. This phrase may be understood as referring either to the earth itself, “earth” being considered in apposition to “lower parts,” or to “hell” (*hadēs*, see on Matt. 11:23), where the soul of Christ is described as having gone at death (Acts 2:31; see Vol. V, p. 918). The latter interpretation would make the passage speak specifically of the death and burial of Christ. It was this humiliation of Christ that led to

His exaltation (Phil. 2:5–11). By entering into such an experience He became an understanding and effective high priest, acquainted with all the vicissitudes of human life, even death itself (Heb. 2:14–18; 7:25–27).

10. The same. The descent was deep, but the ascent is higher than the depth would suggest (cf. ch. 1:10, 20–23).

Above all heavens. Perhaps a figurative expression denoting the height of exaltation. The Jews spoke of seven heavens, and Paul himself referred to the third heaven (2 Cor. 12:2).

Fill all things. Some hold that the apostle is here speaking of the omnipresence of Christ; that as a man, Christ had accepted the limitations of humanity, but now He is in a position to bestow His gifts and pour out His grace in unlimited power and glory; that He is the Light of the world, the Sun of Righteousness, shedding His life-giving rays into every darkened corner. Others hold that the apostle is here speaking of Christ filling all things in the sense that He is the head of the body, “the fulness of him that filleth all in all” (ch. 1:23). Every blessing known to man springs from Him.

11. He gave. In Greek the word for “he” is emphatic, meaning “he himself,” the one just described.

Apostles. See on Acts 1:2; 1 Cor. 12:28. Paul is not so much saying that certain gifts were given to men in order that they might become apostles, as that they who had received the gift were themselves being given to the church. The church was receiving to its ministry men who were properly equipped for their functions. Compare Rom. 12:6–8.

Prophets. See on Gen. 20:7; Matt. 11:9; 1 Cor. 12:10. Prophets were expounders and explainers of the will of God that had been made known to them by supernatural means. They are mentioned along with apostles in Eph. 2:20; 3:5. The idea of foretelling is not essential to the meaning of the word, nor is the predictive element found in all prophetic utterances (Acts 15:32; 1 Cor. 14:3). The prophetic gift was indispensable to the founding of the church in NT times, and is the appointed guide of the remnant church (Rev. 19:10).

Evangelists. Gr. *euaggelistai*, “preachers of the gospel,” related to the verb *euaggelizō* (see on Acts 8:4). The *euaggelistai* were apparently not attached to any particular locality, but bore their testimony from place to place. They probably did not exercise the full authority of apostles (Acts 21:8; 2 Tim. 4:5). The ministry of the evangelists appears to have been directed chiefly to the heathen, whereas the pastors and teachers served the local congregations.

The question may be raised as to why Paul does not refer to the work of bishops, deacons, and others at this point. Apparently he is here speaking of those who were conspicuous by having received the gifts of the Spirit for the purpose of instruction, rather than of those whose work was more administrative—without, however, implying either superiority or inferiority. These offices were not mutually exclusive.

Pastors and teachers. The structure of this phrase, in the Greek, suggests that Paul intends to speak of two phases of one office. Any effective ministry is a teaching ministry. The pastoral function of the ministry is presented in John 21:16; Acts 20:28, 29; 1 Peter 5:2, 3; etc., and the teaching aspect in Acts 13:1; Rom. 12:7; 1 Tim. 3:2, and many other passages. The Master Himself was the great pastor-teacher, shepherding the flock and teaching them.

12. For. Or, “with a view to.”

Perfecting. Gr. *katartismos*, an “equipping,” a “perfecting.” The verb *katartizō* is used in Matt. 4:21 for the mending of nets, in Gal. 6:1 for the restoring of those overtaken in a fault. Compare on 1 Cor. 1:10. The gifts were for the purpose of “mending” the saints and uniting them. The “perfecting” involves, as the context suggests, an ordered ministry and government of the church.

Work of the ministry. Or, “work of ministering,” “work of services,” thus including all types of ministry and serving within the church. The officers of the church are not to lord it over the flock but are to consider themselves servants. This is the immediate purpose of the gift.

Edifying. Or, “building up.” The church is to be built up in both character and numbers.

13. Till. The offices referred to will be necessary and will persist until the kingdom of God is established.

Come. Or, “arrive at,” “attain.”

Unity. This word is connected with both faith and knowledge; that is, unity of faith in Christ and unity of knowledge of Him. Faith is always to be associated with knowledge.

Knowledge. Gr. *epignōsis*, developed spiritual “knowledge” (see on ch. 1:17).

Perfect man. Or, “mature man.” This refers not so much to the individual as to the church, which is to come to a state of organic unity, completeness, and maturity as contrasted with the childish immaturity suggested in v. 14. For both the individual and the church, likeness to Christ is the goal to be reached (Rom. 8:29). The refusal to grow is a greater sin than immaturity itself, and is the outcome of self-satisfaction and low ideals.

Stature. Gr. *hēlikia*, “age,” “period of life,” “stature.” Here the idea of maturity seems to be prominent. Compare Luke 2:52; 12:25.

Fulness of Christ. See on Eph. 1:23; 3:19; cf. John 1:14, 16. Christ alone has the full stature and is the complete man, the perfect man. We are called upon to participate in that nature, and all the offices of the church and the graces of the Spirit are given to that end.

14. Children. Gr. *nēpioi*, “infants.” The word is often rendered “babes” (Matt. 11:25; Rom. 2:20; etc.). Metaphorically, it means childishness rather than childlikeness (cf. 1 Cor. 3:1; 13:11; Gal. 4:1, 3; Heb. 5:13). We are enjoined to become like “little children,” *paidia* (Matt. 18:2–4), in humility and trustfulness, but not in impulsiveness and immaturity. The object of the bestowal of the gifts is that God’s children might grow up into spiritual manhood. There is no more pitiful sight than that of arrested mental and physical development in a person of mature years.

Tossed to and fro. Literally, “being tossed by waves.” The lack of steadiness so often associated with youth is not to be the mark of the believer; patience, endurance, stability, are his characteristics (cf. James 1:6; Heb. 13:9). Those who are forever seeking after some new thing, and are attracted by some sensational idea, form a feeble foundation for the life of the church. Equally, theological and philosophical speculation beyond legitimate limits makes for instability of belief and character.

Wind of doctrine. Or, “wind of the teaching.” Paul is not here slighting doctrine or theology as expressing a systematized body of knowledge concerning God, but rather warning against the indecision, uncertainty, and vagueness that accompany so much

theology. He is doubtless also referring to idle speculation that often marks religious discussion. Both of these extremes are disturbing elements in the life of the church.

Sleight. Literally, “dice playing.” The “winds of doctrine” are calculated to deceive, as when some unsuspecting player falls victim to a cunning cardsharp. It is not merely a question of chance, for the dice have been loaded; what appears to be the teaching of Christ is not actually so. In his final address to the Ephesian elders at Miletus, Paul had warned them that “grievous wolves” would enter in among them (Acts 20:29), and apparently that time had arrived. Integrity in teaching the truth is as essential as honesty in its practice.

Cunning craftiness. Gr. *panourgia*, “cunning,” “knavery,” “craftiness” (see Luke 20:23; 1 Cor. 3:19).

Whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Literally, “toward [or, “with a view to”] the craftiness of deceit.” Their end objective is deceit.

15. Speaking the truth. The Greek includes the idea of being true as well as speaking the truth, with the implication of following the truth rather than the deceptive doctrines against which Paul has been warning. The simple spirit of sincerity and truthfulness is an effective guard against deceptive winds of doctrine (see John 3:21; 8:44; 18:37; 1 John 1:8; 2 John 4).

In love. Love and the truth are inseparable. Truth must be not only accurate in idea but loving in manner (cf. Gal. 4:16). Love, however, does not imply the condoning of sin. None of the apostles was more specific in his denunciation of evil-doers than was Paul, but love was the inner state of his heart while he spoke the truth; love demanded that the truth be spoken (see Eph. 3:17–19).

The head. As the tree strikes its roots down into the soil for nourishment and moisture, so the growing child of God reaches up to Christ for his vitality and sustenance. Union with Christ is at once the cause and the result of growth. He is the head of each man as well as head of the church (1 Cor. 11:3).

16. Fitly joined. Compare ch. 2:21. Growing up into Him assures vitality flowing from Him into the members of the body, which are closely joined together. It is thus that persons of greatly varying gifts are able to work together.

Compacted. A continuous articulation, one member with the other, assuring solidity and strength. The complex structure grows through contact with the supply of grace from the head.

Effectual working. Gr. *energeia*, “operative power,” “working.” Our word “energy” is derived from *energeia*. Every part has its essential function to perform. Every member is a working member.

Every part. The essential idea is that of mutual coherence and common growth through connection with the head (cf. Col. 2:19).

Maketh increase. While the source of supply is the head, each part or member has a work to perform to bring about the increase. It is a twofold increase—growth of the church in numbers and of the individual in the spiritual graces.

Edifying. See on v. 12.

17. Testify in the Lord. The exhortations that are to follow will be given in the light of Christ as the head of the church and the source of power for right living. Paul is not expressing merely his personal opinion. He feels deeply that which he is about to teach

them. For similar affirmations see Acts 20:26; Rom. 1:9; 2 Cor. 1:23; Gal. 5:3; Phil. 1:8; 1 Thess. 2:5.

Walk. See on ch. 2:2, 10.

Other Gentiles. Literally, “the rest of the Gentiles.” However, textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of “other.” Paul urges that believers should be different from the Gentiles. The Ephesians themselves were once Gentiles, but now they belong to the “Israel of God” (Gal. 6:16).

Vanity. Gr. *mataiotēs* (see on Rom. 8:20). The idea is not of conceit but of frivolous and empty aims. Without Christ the Gentile wanders on aimlessly, hopelessly, and recklessly. In Rom. 1:21–32 Paul draws a picture of utter depravity when man gives himself up to “vain” (*mataios*) imaginations. This degeneration has taken place in the governing part of the man’s nature, the mind, so that the rational faculties have yielded to misdirected or undirected imaginings. This vanity was not merely worthless, it was degrading.

18. Understanding darkened. The idea is that of blindness of the intellect. The metaphor of darkness is used frequently in Scripture (John 3:19; Acts 26:18; Col. 1:13; 1 Thess. 5:4, 5; 1 John 1:5, 6). The natural mind cannot comprehend spiritual truth, for it has been corrupted by sin, not only in its moral perceptions but in its reasoning capacities. Unaided reason is wholly unequal to the spiritual insights necessary to a saving acquaintance with God.

Alienated. See on Eph. 2:12; cf. Col. 1:21. This word, and the Greek one from which it is translated, suggest a former condition of union. Man, who once held communion with his Maker, is now separated from the life of God, that is, from the life that comes from Him (1 John 5:11). Alienation from the life of God means the loss of eternal life—spiritual death.

Ignorance. Their ignorance resulted, not from an intellectual incapacity, but from a moral lack for which they could be held responsible. Ignorance of the will of God is no excuse when one has had the opportunity to know that will, for God can never “wink” at a guilty ignorance (cf. Acts 17:30).

Blindness. Gr. *pōrōsis*, “hardening,” the idea being that of spiritual callousness and insensibility (cf. Rom. 11:25). In Rom. 1:21 Paul describes how this hardening came about, the implication there as well as here being that men have brought it on themselves.

19. Being past feeling. Or, “having become insensible.”

Given themselves over. This signifies a voluntary yielding. There is a vast difference between the condition of one who is tripped by the wiles of the devil and one who deliberately invites his authority. Compare Rom. 1:24, where it is said that “God also gave them up to uncleanness.” But the giving up by God always follows the responsible choice of the sinner to walk in the evil way; it never precedes that choice. The greatest heights and the lowest depths are attained by the power of the will, exercised in one direction or in the other, whether for right or for wrong.

Lasciviousness. Gr. *aselgeia* (see on Rom. 13:13). This word indicates a complete and reckless abandonment to lust. Human nature, left to itself, is the same now as it was then.

Greediness. Gr. *pleonexia*, “a desire to have more,” “covetousness.” *Pleonexia* is frequently linked with impurity in the NT (cf. Eph. 5:3, 5; Col. 3:5).

20. Learned Christ. A sharp contrast to the life of the pagan is here presented. This phrase is not used elsewhere, “know Christ” being the more common expression (2 Cor. 5:16; Phil. 3:10; 1 John 4:7). To have “learned Christ” is not merely to have learned something about Him; it is to have become acquainted with His office and work as priest, prophet, king, advocate, and mediator, and to have appropriated for one’s life the benefits of His atoning work. When Jesus Himself said “learn of me” (Matt. 11:29), He was presenting Himself as the example; here He is offered, not as the great teacher, but as the very object of knowledge and faith.

21. If so be. Or, “assuming.” In Greek the condition is stated as true. Furthermore, the emphasis is on the pronoun “him.” They had heard Him as the sheep hear the voice of the shepherd, and they were bound to obey Him.

By him. Or, “in him.” That is, they received the knowledge of Him by vital union with Him.

Truth. For a definition of truth see on John 8:32. Jesus declared Himself to be the truth (John 14:6). All truth was embodied in the person of Jesus. It is not philosophical speculation about Him so much as personal acquaintance with Him and the reception of His grace that yields the truth concerning Him.

Jesus. This single name is rarely used in the epistles, the usual expression being “Jesus Christ,” “Lord Jesus,” or “Christ Jesus.” When the personal name appears alone, the emphasis is upon the historical Jesus, incarnate, crucified, resurrected, ascended. He was the revelation of God, hence the repository of all truth. Christianity stands or falls on the historicity of these events. Paul stakes everything on the idea that at a point in time God uniquely entered into the experience of mankind in the person of the man Jesus.

22. Conversation. Gr. *anastrophē*, “manner of life,” “conduct,” “behavior.” For comment on the related verb *anastrephō* see on ch. 2:3. The former manner of life has been described in ch. 4:17–19. The former sinful nature is to be stripped off once and for all, never to be put on again; the new nature is to be put on (see on v. 24). The robe of righteousness is to replace the filthy garments of self-righteousness.

The old man. See on Rom. 6:6; cf. Col. 3:9. This expression seems to mean more than simply the old acts or habits and to include the very mind and nature that are the source of every act. The old man had died (Rom. 6:6) and should not be revived.

Is corrupt. Literally, “being corrupted,” or “corrupting itself.” The form of the word indicates continuance or progression in corruption in the condition of “the old man.” Sin is a disintegrating factor in the life, a cancerous growth in the spiritual body.

Deceitful lusts. Literally, “lusts of the deception.” The phrase stands in contrast with “truth” (v. 21). If men sensed the bondage and corruption that sin brings to them, it would appear as it really is, a frightful thing. However, its real character is concealed until it has enslaved its victims. The lusts of the flesh are deceitful because they promise happiness but give sorrow, promise freedom but give slavery, promise immunity from the results of wrongdoing, only to bring destruction.

23. Be renewed. Sin is an intruder, a destroyer of the primeval purity of man. Despite centuries of degradation man still shows some traces of the original handiwork of God, and by the work of the Holy Spirit in the new birth and in sanctification “the old man” (v.

22) may be created new again. There is a deep rift in the human soul as there is in the human family, a rift that can be healed only by the unifying influence and power of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spirit of your mind. The change is not a superficial change of opinion or a new doctrinal concept; it affects the nature of the mind, its governing principles.

24. New. Gr. *kainos*, “new [in quality].” The putting on of the new nature, or “man,” is not something we can accomplish of ourselves, nor is it merely a renovated man. God is the active power in the recreation, but the change is not effected without man’s consent and cooperation (see MB 142).

After God. Literally, “according to God.” God Himself is the ideal after which the new man is patterned (Matt. 5:48), and since the “new man” is actually a return to man’s original state, it means the restoration of the image of God in the soul (Gen. 1:27; Ed 125; cf. Col. 3:10).

Created. See on Eph. 2:10; cf. on 2 Cor. 5:17.

Righteousness. Gr. *dikaïosunē* (see on Matt. 5:6).

Holiness. Gr. *hosiotēs*, “piety,” “holiness.” The word occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Luke 1:75. For the adjective *hosios*, “pious,” “holy,” see on Acts 2:27; 13:34.

25. Lying. Gr. *pseudos*, “falsehood,” “untruth,” “lie.” Deceit brings its own disintegration of soul to the deceiver, often hurting him more than the deceived. How can those who are followers of the One who is the truth do anything else but hold to the utmost integrity in all things? In the life of the Christian there is no place for taking advantage of another in a business transaction, for the coloring of stories told, for the conveying of false impressions by innuendo, for the making of promises without the intention of keeping them, for the relaying of rumors and gossip.

Speak ... truth. A quotation from Zech. 8:16. Speaking the truth is a confirmed habit with the Christian.

Members one of another. Lying tends to break down the unity of brotherhood; deceit sets one member against another (cf. 1 Cor. 12:15). There can be no true union between man and man except on the basis of complete confidence (cf. Zech. 8:16).

26. Angry. The quotation is from the LXX of Ps. 4:4 (v. 5, LXX). Commentators differ as to whether the Hebrew of Ps. 4:4 should be translated as in the KJV of that passage, or as in the LXX, with which Paul’s passage agrees. In the Greek both elements “be ye angry” and “sin not” are commands. Various suggestions have been made in an effort to avoid the implication of a command to be angry, none of them satisfactory. The simplest solution seems to be to regard the anger here spoken of as a righteous indignation. A Christian who is not aroused to the point of indignation by manifest wrongs and injustices may be insensitive to some things that ought to concern him. Righteous indignation has a most important function in stimulating men in the battle against evil. Jesus was not angered by any personal affront, but by hypocritical challenges to God and injustices done to others (see Mark 3:5). Justifiable anger is directed against the wrong act without animosity toward the wrongdoer. To be able to separate the two is a supremely great Christian achievement.

Sin not. This is a command, as the Greek clearly indicates. A warning is issued lest justifiable anger lead to feelings of personal resentment, vindictiveness, and loss of

control. Someone has aptly remarked, “We do well to be angry at times, but we have mistaken the times.”

Sun go down. Here is provided a safeguard against the abuse of righteous indignation. While there should always remain an indignation against sin, harbored resentments are soul destroying. A fair test of the quality of one’s anger is whether one can readily pray for the person against whose wrong act the anger is directed.

Wrath. Or, “irritation,” “exasperation,” the evil sense of personal resentment into which even justified anger easily turns.

27. Place. That is, scope or opportunity. Compare Rom. 12:19.

Devil. Gr. *diabolos*, “accuser” (see on Matt. 4:1). Paul uses *diabolos* only in his later epistles (cf. 1 Tim. 3:6, 7, 11; 2 Tim. 2:26; 3:3; Titus 2:3), whereas in his earlier epistles the common term is *Satanas*, “Satan” (Rom. 16:20; 1 Cor. 5:5; 1 Thess. 2:18; 2 Thess. 2:9; but cf. 1 Tim. 1:20; 5:15). The anger referred to in v. 26 gives opportunity for the devil to set the members of the body of Christ one against the other—hence the counsel to give the devil no scope for his activities.

28. Steal no more. Paul is speaking to those who had, in many instances, come out of paganism. Then too, there are many ways besides the outright taking of the property of others in which we may be guilty of this sin, such as a dishonest or sharp business transaction. Hence Paul’s command may apply to professing Christians. Thieving takes many insidious disguises, but in all cases it is a violation of the basic commandment of love to one’s neighbor.

Labour. It may be debated whether the stealing was a cause or a result of idleness, but certainly work is the remedy. Paul does not merely forbid an evil. If it is true that “nature abhors a vacuum,” it is equally true that habits given up must be replaced by others (cf. Matt. 12:43–45). Idleness and theft tend to go together, as do labor and honesty.

Working with his hands. Paul himself set an example by working with his own hands (Acts 20:34), following his Master, who worked at the carpenter’s bench with His own hands. Honest work is essential to the happiness of men, whether it be mental or physical labor, and no Christian has the right to be kept by others if he is able to support himself. There is therapeutic value in hard work; Paul’s instruction is psychologically sound as well as spiritually true (see Rom. 12:11).

May have to give. There is added reason for this exhortation to work. There are many who cannot support themselves because of age or other disability. This gives opportunity for a demonstration of the unity that is the theme of the epistle. It is a Christian privilege to give to those in need, those who would perish without such aid. The making of money for its own sake is not a Christian activity; the rewards of honest labor are to be received and dispersed in the spirit of Christian stewardship. The believer works in order that he may be able to help others after having discharged his obligation to society by supporting himself. Thus he lives in marked contrast with the thief.

29. Corrupt. Gr. *sapros*, “rotten,” “putrid,” “bad.” In Matt. 7:17 *sapros* describes a corrupt tree, and in Matt. 13:48 inedible fish that were thrown away. Foul speech is the sign of a corrupt heart, “for out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh” (Matt. 12:34). Profanity and obscene jests and songs, even the frivolous and insipid

conversation, have no place in the Christian's life; indeed, they are the hallmark of the unregenerate spirit.

Which is good. It is not enough that the Christian merely abstain from unseemly speech. His words are to accomplish a useful purpose. Jesus warned against the use of idle words (Matt. 12:36), words that accomplish no good purpose.

To the use of edifying. Literally, for the "upbuilding of the need." Compare the translation, "edifying, as fits the occasion" (RSV). While speaking does not always have to be of a somber or even serious character, it should always edify or build up, making men better than they were before they heard the words. As in v. 28 the Christian's work was to be for the benefit of others, so here his words also are to be for the good of his fellow men. Not only indecent speech but also that which is selfish, malicious, critical, or suggestive, corrupts. Here again the apostle seems to have in the back of his mind the central theme of his epistle—unity. That which does not edify tears down, and is therefore to be discarded. Compare 1 Thess. 5:11–14.

Grace. Gr. *charis*, here probably meaning "benefit" (cf. on Rom. 3:24).

30. Grieve. Gr. *lupeō*, "to cause pain," "to distress," "to grieve." The Greek phrase may be translated, "stop grieving." The personality of the Holy Spirit is here clearly implied; only *persons* can be grieved. For the manner in which the Holy Spirit may be grieved see on Matt. 12:31.

Sealed. As in ch. 1:12, 13 believers were said to be sealed "in Christ," so here they are said to be sealed in the "holy Spirit" (see on Eph. 1:13; cf. 2 Cor. 1:22). For the significance of the seal see on Rev. 7:2. The reception of the Holy Spirit at conversion is God's authentication that the believer is accepted, that the approval of Heaven rests upon his choice and experience.

Unto. Rather, "with a view to." It is hoped that the believer will persevere and that he will be glorified. This can be only if he holds "fast the confidence and the rejoicing of the hope firm unto the end" (Heb. 3:6). The act of sealing does not forever guarantee salvation, for it is possible to sin against the Holy Spirit and thus forfeit redemption (see on Matt. 12:31; cf. on Heb. 6:4–6). The sin for which there is no pardon comes as a climax to a series of grievings. It is important therefore to guard against even a single act of grieving.

Redemption. See on ch. 1:14.

31. Bitterness. Gr. *pikria*, "bitterness," that is, metaphorically, of temper, character, and disposition. An embittered person is in a state of continual antagonism to his fellows, thus lacking unity with them (cf. Acts 8:23; Rom. 3:14). For a catalogue of evils similar to those listed here see Col. 3:8.

Wrath, and anger. Gr. *thumos kai orgē*. *Thumos* denotes a momentary furious and excited state of mind; *orgē*, a permanent condition of resentment and enmity (cf. on Rom. 2:8).

Clamour. Gr. *kraugē*, "an outcry," "loud quarreling." The quarrel between Pharisees and Sadducees over the doctrine of the resurrection was a *kraugē* (Acts 23:9).

Evil speaking. Gr. *blasphēmia*, "blasphemy," "slander," "railing." Clamor soon becomes slander in an effort to ruin the reputation of others. All the evils mentioned in

this passage tend to disturb the unity of the body of believers, raising barriers between those who should be drawn together by virtue of their common citizenship in heaven.

Malice. Gr. *kakia* (see on Rom. 1:29). Some see a natural order in Paul's list of evils: Bitterness soon becomes a passionate and explosive wrath, wrath merges into a persistent anger, anger leads to unseemly brawling, brawling is always accompanied by abuse or slander, and all of it springs from a satanic malice lodged in the hearts of men. All of them are to be put away; they are all part of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19–21).

32. Kind. Gr. *chrēstoi*, “gentle,” “gracious.” Simple kindness or gentleness (*chrēstotēs*) is one of the profoundest recommendations of the Christian, and is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal. 5:22). It is the opposite of the malice of Eph. 4:31. By a spiritual alchemy, conversion changes malice into kindness.

Tenderhearted. Gr. *eusplagchnos*, “compassionate,” “tenderhearted.” The word is translated “pitiful” in Peter 3:8. Compare the expression “bowels of mercies” (Col. 3:12), which implies a tender regard for the weaknesses and needs of others. A callous indifference to suffering is wholly incompatible with the Christian spirit (cf. Luke 6:36; Phil. 2:4; 1 Peter 3:8).

Forgiving. Kindness and tenderheartedness profit little unless they are given expression in the forgiving spirit. Kindness may be merely a kind of courtesy or politeness if it is not willing to take the step of forgiveness. The forgiving spirit is more than an ideal or even a virtue; it is a certain attitude of heart and soul.

The Lord Himself is the only model we should attempt to follow (Matt. 6:12; Luke 6:36). Forgiveness for men was purchased at infinite cost, whereas it costs men nothing, except the sacrifice of some personal pride, to forgive others. Our forgiveness is to be measured against the divine forgiveness (cf. Matt. 18:32, 33), a fact that becomes the more startling the more it is pondered.

For Christ's sake. Literally, “in Christ,” the key phrase in the epistle (see on ch. 1:1). There is no basis for the translation, “for Christ's sake.” Such a reading gives support to the unfortunate concept that the Father had to be persuaded by Christ to give up His harsh intentions toward the sinner before forgiveness could be exercised (see 2 Cor. 5:19; see on Rom. 5:10).

You. Important textual evidence may be cited (cf. p. 10) for the reading “us.”

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1 9T 276

1–3ML 39; RC 65

1–65T 239, 292

3 ML 276; 9T 197

3–5GC 379

5 9T 196

7 COL 149; ML 37

7, 8 COL 327

8 DA 786; EW 190

8–168T 176

11, 12 MM 249; 8T 170

11–13DA 362; ML 38; TM 29; 3T 446; 5T 237; 6T 48, 243, 291

11–15TM 52

12, 13 GC viii; TM 406
 13 AA 49, 284; AH 213, 298; CH 594; CSW 30, 106; CT 491; Ev 337; FE 167, 199; GC 470; GW 283; ML 101; MM 32; MYP 16, 45; SC 67; 2T 237; 3T 446, 559; 4T 359, 367, 556; 5T 105, 252, 264, 265, 267, 309, 484, 577, 597; 7T 24; 9T 48, 153, 184
 13, 14 AA 470
 14 Ev 362; GW 289; 1T 418; 3T 427; 4T 74; 5T 80, 273
 15 COL 67, 97; SC 67, 75, 81; TM 288; 1T 353; 3T 46; 4T 367; 5T 393, 500; 9T 160
 16 TM 27; 7T 131, 174
 17, 18 AA 470
 17–195T 171
 18 DA 764; 2T 138; 4T 147
 19 1T 189
 22–244T 92; 5T 172
 23 FE 182
 24 CS 28; Ed 27; MH 163; 2T 484
 25 Ed 286
 26 TM 101
 28 CS 122; EW 58, 95; 1T 206
 29 AH 435; COL 336, 337; GW 122; MB 69; ML 114; 2T 302, 316
 30 CH 561; GW 98; MYP 387; 1T 124; 2T 263; 3T 73, 265; 4T 410, 491, 493, 626; 5T 120, 310, 365; 8T 56
 32 EW 26; MB 114; ML 235

CHAPTER 5

2 *After general exhortations, to love, 3 to fly fornication, 4 and all uncleanness, 7 not to converse with the wicked, 15 to walk warily, and to be 18 filled with the Spirit, 22 he descendeth to the particular duties, how wives ought to obey their husbands, 25 and husbands ought to love their wives, 32 even as Christ doth his church.*

1. Followers. Gr. *mimētai*, “imitators.” This verse is a continuation and expansion of ch. 4:32. The apostle has been urging that the example of God be followed, particularly in the spirit of forgiveness. God is the pattern, the ideal to which we strive to attain, in this case with special reference to the spirit of forgiveness. Surely the earnest believer, by God’s own grace, can learn to forgive even as God forgave.

Dear children. Or, “beloved children.” The knowledge that God loves us is the first source of the ability to imitate Him (1 John 4:19). The realization of His Fatherhood encourages us to love one another (1 John 4:11). Those who sincerely call God their Father must inevitably regard other human beings as brothers and sisters.

2. Walk in love. Or, “keep on walking in love,” “make it a habit to talk in love.” One’s life is to be spent in the atmosphere of love. For a definition of “love” (*agapē*) see on 1 Cor. 13:1.

Christ also hath loved us. Important textual evidence may also be cited (cf. p. 10) for the reading “you” instead of “us” (cf. on ch. 4:32).

Given himself. Christ showed His love by giving Himself, and we cannot do less. The strength of Christ’s love was so great that He voluntarily offered Himself in sacrifice. One of the purposes of His incarnation was to exhibit His love and that of the Father, for

“God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself” (2 Cor. 5:19). “Greater love hath no man than this” (John 15:13).

An offering and a sacrifice. Christ’s ministry and sacrificial act were prefigured in the sanctuary services. Christ’s voluntary gift of Himself was prefigured in the ceremonial ritual of ancient Israel. Some have suggested a distinction between the word “offering” as denoting an offering without blood and the word “sacrifice” as a slain sacrifice. The Greek words thus translated do not necessarily imply such a distinction. Paul was probably borrowing the phrase from Ps. 40:6.

Sweet-smelling savour. Literally, “an odor of a sweet smell.” God the Father was well pleased with the offering of Christ as well as with the spirit in which it was made, not, however, in the sense that He needed to be appeased or to be reconciled (see on Rom. 5:10). For the figure of a “sweet-smelling savour” see further on 2 Cor. 2:15 (cf. Phil. 4:18).

3. But. One of the striking contrasts that Paul often makes to heighten the effect of his message. What he now presents is in most odious contrast with the “sweet-smelling savour” of the offering of Christ (v. 2).

Fornication. Gr. *porneia*, a general term for illicit sexual intercourse of all kinds (see on 1 Cor. 6:18).

Uncleanness. Or, “impurity.” Fornication and uncleanness are frequently mentioned together, as in 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Col. 3:5. The apostle has passed from the consideration of holy love to that of unholy love, to show how the most sacred sentiments can be corrupted.

Covetousness. Gr. *pleonexia*, “the desire to have more.” The association of this sin with fornication and uncleanness is perhaps significant (cf. 1 Cor. 5:11; Eph. 5:5; Col. 3:5). Covetousness is greed for more, and this is also a mark of all the sensual sins. The covetousness of both lust and avarice is to be considered among the grosser sins and to be abhorred by all who bear the Christian name. How many Christians are prepared to place the sin of avarice in the same evil category as fornication? Greed is a deadly sin that often passes unnoticed in the most respectable circles; indeed, it is frequently hidden in such terms as “competition” and “success.”

Named. So frightful and frightening were the sins referred to that they were not even fit for discussion among saints. They have to be named for purposes of reproof, but it should be unnecessary to discuss them, for they should not exist among the saints.

Saints. Gr. *hagioi*, “holy ones” (see on Rom. 1:7).

4. Filthiness. Gr. *aischrotēs*, “revolting, shameful conduct,” probably including filthy, obscene speech. The word does not occur elsewhere in the NT.

Foolish talking. Insipid, stupid talking, without edification or profit. Every idle word is to be brought into judgment (Matt. 12:36), and foolish speech involves more than mere emptiness.

Jesting. Gr. *eutrapelia*, from two roots meaning “well” and “to turn”; hence, “wittiness,” but here used in the low sense of buffoonery, ribaldry, or levity. The apostle is not speaking against the play of innocent humor, but against jesting that is coarse and low.

Not convenient. That is, not fitting or becoming.

Giving of thanks. The spirit of gratitude and cheerfulness is the best antidote to the unbecoming spirit of levity (cf. James 5:13).

5. This ye know. An emphatic expression meaning that whatever else may be doubtful, this is certain. An appeal is being made to the conscience.

Whoremonger. Gr. *pornos* , “a fornicator,” one who practices *porneia* (see on v. 3). No person of licentious character is fit for the kingdom (see Rev. 22:15).

Unclean person. Or, “impure person” (cf. v. 3).

Covetous man. See on v. 3. Covetousness is defined as idolatry (cf. Col. 3:5) and is worthy of the same condemnation.

An idolater. The covetous person makes a god out of the object of his greed. Idolatry is one of the works of the flesh (Gal. 5:19–21).

Any inheritance. See on 1 Cor. 6:9.

Of Christ and of God. The divinity of Christ is at least strongly implied by the close association of His name with the name of God (cf. on Rom. 9:5). The Greek may also be translated, “of Christ, even God.”

6. Vain words. Literally, “empty words,” such as words suggesting that the sins enumerated (vs. 3–5) would not keep one out of the kingdom. Heresies were already threatening the infant church. Paul is warning against the deceptive manner in which false teachers were insinuating themselves into the Christian community. For further general warnings about the deceptions that would divide the flock see Rom. 16:18; 1 Cor. 3:18; 2 Cor. 11:3; Col. 2:8; 2 Thess. 2:3, 4.

Wrath of God. See on Rom. 1:18.

Children of disobedience. See on ch. 2:2.

7. Partakers. Literally, “joint sharers,” that is, with them in their sins.

8. Sometimes. Gr. *pote* , “once” or “formerly.” In Old English “sometimes” had this meaning.

Darkness. Compare Rom. 2:19; 1 John 2:11. Formerly they were sunk in darkness and practiced the abominations of darkness (cf. Eph. 2:11, 12; 4:18).

Light. The idea here seems to be that not only were they “in the light” but they *were* light—by virtue of their union with Christ, who is Himself the light.

Walk. That is, conduct your life (see on ch. 2:2).

children of light. The extraordinary purity of the lives of the early Christians as contrasted with the lives of the pagans about them was noted, somewhat grudgingly, by such men as Pliny, who commented on it in writing to Trajan (*Letters* x. 96; Loeb ed., vol. 2, pp. 401–405). Compare John 12:36; 1 Thess. 5:5; James 1:17.

9. Fruit of the Spirit. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “fruit of the light.” The fruit of the Spirit is also the fruit of light. “Fruit” is used in the sense of result or consequence. As darkness is destructive of growth and fruit, so light is essential to them.

Goodness. Gr. *agathōsunē* (see on Gal. 5:22).

Righteousness. Gr. *dikaiosunē* , here, the principle of rectitude (see on Matt. 5:6).

Truth. Gr. *alētheia* , here probably denoting sincerity in all its forms, in word, thought, and deed. The good, the right, and the true comprise the commandment and the whole duty of man.

10. Proving. Gr. *dokimazō* (see on Rom. 2:18). The Christian must be continually testing the good, the right, and the true with the intent of finding out what is pleasing to God (Rom. 12:2). The will of God as revealed in His Word and in experience is the touchstone by which the testing and approving is to be done. “What would Jesus do?” becomes an important question continuously in the mind of the believer.

Acceptable. Or, “pleasing” (cf. Col. 1:10).

11. No fellowship. Not only will they not participate in unfruitful works, they will not countenance them nor have any sympathy with them.

Unfruitful. That is, as far as bringing forth good fruit is concerned. Compare Gal. 5:19–21 on the “works of the flesh.”

Reprove. Gr. *elegchō*, “to refute,” “to convict,” “to expose.” Compare the use of the word in Luke 3:19; John 3:20; 8:9; 16:8. By word and life Christians should be a continuous rebuke to the world of evil. It is not sufficient to “have no fellowship” with the works of evil; they must be reprov'd. The Christian cannot be neutral, a passive observer in the face of wickedness; he must be aggressive in exposure and denunciation of sin. Sympathy with afflicted men must not degenerate into an easygoing indifference or sentimental tolerance, otherwise it will be hard to show that we have “no fellowship” with the works of darkness.

12. Shame. Christian delicacy and refinement will not permit the discussion of certain things, let alone the practice of them. Usually it is sufficient to name evils without describing them and their processes in detail. A certain frankness is to be commended, but little can be said in favor of the startling bluntness with which sin is often discussed in our sophisticated age. Paul named and denounced shameful vices (vs. 3–5), but he did not paint them in lurid colors so as to appeal to the low and sensual appetites of readers.

In secret. Paul may have been referring to some of the “mysteries” celebrated by pagans, which were accompanied by lewd and obscene initiation ceremonies. Or he may have been alluding simply to those evil practices that the corrupt or weak person secretly engages in.

13. Reprov'd. Gr. *elegchō* (see on v. 11). The hidden and dark things in a person's life are exposed under the bright beams of spiritual light. When Christ turned the light of truth on the hypocrisy of His day, the sham was seen for what it really was. When deeds done in the dark are viewed in the light, their outlines are obscured, their true character unrevealed (see on John 3:20).

Made manifest. By the flashing of the light of truth on the life, the secret sins mentioned in v. 12 are exposed. “The word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any two-edged sword, ... and is a discernor of the thoughts and intents of the heart” (Heb. 4:12). It is a sun-glass that focuses the light of truth with burning conviction on the conscience.

14. Wherefore. That is, in view of what has been said in regard to the dispelling of darkness by the light.

He saith. Or, “it saith.”

Awake. This quotation is not found in the OT. Some see a possible allusion to Isa. 26:19; 60:1. Others suggest as its source some early Christian hymn unknown to us. Evidently there were spiritual sleepers in the church then, as always. The exhortation to

arouse is common in Scripture (Rom. 13:11–14; 1 Cor. 15:34; 1 Thess. 5:6, 8; 1 Peter 1:13).

The dead. That is, those sunken in the sleep of spiritual death.

Give thee light. Or, “shine upon thee.” The soul that turns to Christ is assured of the healing rays of light that come from the “Sun of righteousness” (Mal. 4:2). The plea is for the impenitent to arouse from their lethargy, and thus to give Christ an opportunity to do His saving work in their souls.

15. Circumspectly. Gr. *akribōs*, “strictly,” “accurately,” “diligently,” “carefully.”

Textual evidence is divided (cf. p. 10) between this and the reading, “Take diligent heed how you walk.” The believer is urged to follow a disciplined course. He is to make every effort to resist the temptations that surround him.

Fools. Literally, “unwise ones.”

16. Redeeming the time. Literally, “buying up for yourselves the opportune time,” that is, making the most of the opportunity (cf. Col. 4:5). To take advantage of every moment of time for great and noble purposes is the obligation and privilege of every Christian. Redeeming the time is more than simply refraining from idleness or frivolous activities. A person is not good merely because he is not bad. Like Jesus, one must be “about” his “Father’s business” (Luke 2:49), actively seeking opportunity to do good (Gal. 6:10), even to one’s enemies (Matt. 5:44). In the parable of the Unjust Steward, Jesus pointed to the diligence and wisdom of the merchants of the world in conducting their affairs, as an example to the children of light (see on Luke 16:1–12).

Days are evil. The necessity for seizing every opportunity that arises is apparent when one considers how life is exposed continuously to evil of all kinds, not only the prevailing moral evil, but ill-health, persecution, and mental suffering, which deprive the Christian of many opportunities to serve (cf. Eccl. 12:1; Amos 5:13).

17. Wherefore. That is, in view of the argument he has just presented regarding darkness, light, time, and evil days.

Unwise. Gr. *aphrones*, “senseless,” “foolish.” Compare the use of the word in Luke 11:40; 12:20; 1 Cor. 15:36. It is sin for the Christian not to use his God-given faculties and intelligence in the contemplation of God’s will for him.

Understanding. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading “understand ye.” There can be no wise living without understanding. “The knowledge of the holy is understanding” (Prov. 9:10).

Will of the Lord. To know the will of the Lord should be the supreme aim of the believer (see on John 7:17). The transformed mind has not only a capacity to understand the will of God, but a divinely implanted intuition which is the means of proving it as “good, and acceptable, and perfect” (Rom. 12:2).

18. Be not drunk with wine. Paul has been speaking of darkness and of the foolishness of unwise men, and there are few things more foolish than drunkenness. This evil is frequently condemned in Scripture (Prov. 20:1; Luke 21:34; 1 Cor. 5:11; Gal. 5:21; 1 Tim. 3:3). Paul is probably thinking of it not only as a gratification of appetite, but also as a social evil that glorifies wastefulness, emotional excitement at the expense of good sense, and reckless pursuit of pleasure. Anything that takes man’s reason from him means deterioration of soul and unfitness for the kingdom of God.

Excess. Gr. *asōtia*, “debauchery,” “riot.” Compare the use of the word in Titus 1:6; 1 Peter 4:4; cf. Luke 15:13, where the adverb *asōtōs* appears. Debauchery, revelry, abandonment, excesses of every kind, follow indulgence in wine.

With the Spirit. Or, “in [your] spirit,” which may be considered as referring to the human spirit. The excitement of drunkenness is opposed by the joy and animation of the spirit. The seeking after an earthly stimulant is replaced by the spiritual enthusiasm of the human spirit energized by the Holy Spirit. Although it is true that soberness accompanies the work of the Holy Spirit, nevertheless, the effect of the presence of the Holy Spirit is seen in enthusiastic witnessing for the faith. On the day of Pentecost the demonstration of the Spirit in the words and acts of the disciples was scoffingly compared to drunkenness (Acts 2:13).

19. Speaking to yourselves. Or, “addressing one another” (RSV). There is here perhaps a suggestion of antiphonal singing or responsive chanting, or it may be simply a reference to mutual benefit that is to be gained by common worship. Pliny says, in speaking of early Christians and their worship, “They were in the habit of meeting on a certain fixed day before it was light, when they sang in alternate verses a hymn to Christ, as to a god” (*Letters* x. 96; Loeb ed., vol. 2, p. 403). One of the first manifestations of being filled with the Spirit is joy in the fellowship of believers and in acts of common worship.

Psalms and hymns and spiritual songs. The distinctions among these three types of praise may be as follows: In general, the psalms were the OT psalms sung to instrumental accompaniment; the hymns, praises to God, composed by the believers and sung by the whole group; while the spiritual songs or odes were of a more general and meditative nature, with or without accompaniment (see Matt. 26:30; Acts 4:24–30; 1 Cor. 14:26; James 5:13; cf. on Col. 3:16). Praise is a most important part of worship.

Making melody. Gr. *psallō*, “to play a stringed instrument,” “to sing a hymn.” The word may thus refer either to instrumental music or to singing in general. Some think *psallō* here refers to the former, inasmuch as “singing” has already been mentioned; others think that in the NT the word means only “to sing.”

In your heart. Praise must spring from the heart and not be merely a performance. Music has ever been used as an aid to worship, and Christianity has elevated and consecrated it. In religious worship the singing must be directed toward God, otherwise it is little more than an exhibition of self. It was this danger that led Calvin and Knox to speak disparagingly of instrumental music. Music does not exist for its own sake, but, like prayer, as a means of approach to God. Indeed, prayer may go forth in many forms, such as words, meditation, music.

20. Giving thanks. “Nothing tends more to promote health of body and of soul than does a spirit of gratitude and praise” (MH 251). The spirit of praise is an antidote to evil and discouragement. When everything else is at its worst, the Christian is at his best and is most cheerful. The spirit of thankfulness prevails in joy or in sorrow, in victory or in defeat, for it is a permanent, sustaining attribute of Christian character (see Col. 3:17; 1 Thess. 5:18).

All things. Things unpleasant as well as pleasant (Job 2:10; Rom. 8:28). There is no special virtue in being thankful merely for blessings received, any more than there is in

loving one's friends (Matt. 5:46). Hardships, like our enemies, are more difficult to live with.

God and the Father. Rather, "God, even the Father."

In the name of. God is the recipient of thanksgiving, but it is offered in the name of Jesus Christ. The Father is entitled to gratitude because He is our Father (Rom. 8:14–17; Gal. 4:4–6). He has demonstrated His Fatherhood in the giving of His Son; therefore prayer and thanksgiving are offered in the Son's name. Since through Christ all that the Father has to give has been made available to men, we can approach our God with the utmost confidence (John 14:13; 15:16; 16:23, 24).

21. Submitting yourselves. This general principle of conduct may be related to what has preceded, but it leads naturally to the thought of the following passage, where it is given specific application. Submission, humility, and subjection are essential characteristics of the believer. Before God and one's fellow men, self is to be brought low. Often the demands we make of one another, even of our rights, are contrary to the spirit of loving ministry, which is the spirit of the gospel (John 13:15, 16; Gal. 5:15). In addition to submission to superiors in age and authority, and respect for those we consider equals, there is also a Christian submission due to those who may be considered inferior in position. This submission reveals itself in consideration, charity, and respect for the personality of all God's children.

In this general statement of principle the apostle has prepared the way for the detailed instruction he is about to give. He proposes three areas in which the spirit of submission is to find full expression if the relationships involved are to be conducted in a Christian spirit fashion: relations of husbands and wives, of parents and children, and of masters and servants.

Fear of God. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the reading "fear of Christ," that is, reverence for Christ.

22. Wives, submit yourselves. Paul ascribes to women a position of subordination in relation to their husbands (cf. 1 Peter 3:1–6). The ethics of Christian relationships within the family are clear when once it is seen that difference and subordination do not in any sense imply inferiority. The submission enjoined upon the wife is of the kind that can be given only between equals, not a servile obedience, but a voluntary submission in the respects in which the man was qualified by his Maker to be head (cf. Gen. 3:16). Every community must, for purposes of organization and existence, have a head. Even in our free age of insistence on the equality of men and women, the man who does not assume the leadership of his family in love is regarded with something akin to contempt by men and women alike. This principle of submission is permanent, but its specific application may vary from age to age according to custom and social consciousness. Compare 1 Cor. 11:3, 7–9; Col. 3:18; 1 Tim. 2:11, 12; Titus 2:5.

Own husbands. This is said, not by way of contrast with other women's husbands, but to emphasize the holy relationship of possession upon which the submission is founded.

As unto the Lord. Compare the phrase, "as it is fit in the Lord" (Col. 3:18). The wife should see in her relation to her husband a reflection, or illustration, of her relation to Christ.

23. The head. This phrase appearing twice in this verse is without the definite article in the Greek, thus emphasizing the quality of headship. Paul makes the same assertion in

1 Cor. 11:3. At the same time he emphasizes that before God there is “neither bond [slave] nor free, there is neither male nor female” (Gal. 3:28). Distinctions of sex, class, or race are not found among those who are “in Christ”; nevertheless, the different sexes, classes, and races each have their peculiar contribution to make to each other and to society by virtue of their differing qualities. The headship of the husband consists in his ability and responsibility to care for his wife, in the same way that Christ cares for the church.

The body. That is, the church. As Christ is the “saviour of the body,” the church, so the husband should be the protector and sustainer of his wife and family. No question of inferiority or of headship ever arises in a family where the husband shows the same solicitude for the welfare of his wife that Christ shows for His church.

24. Church is subject. What characterizes the subjection of the church to Christ? Willingness, confidence, faith, love. The servitude of love is a most pleasant experience; “my burden is light,” says the Head of the church (Matt. 11:30).

In every thing. That is, of course, in everything that is in harmony with the mind of God, for no loyalty can stand between the individual soul and God.

25. Love your wives. The response of the husband to the wife’s submission is not to give a command, but to love. That immediately makes a partnership out of what otherwise would be a dictatorship. A true husband never utters rude commands. His love will find expression in a variety of ways. It will be given in words of understanding and affection. The husband will properly provide for the wife’s temporal support (1 Tim. 5:8); he will do everything possible to assure her happiness (1 Cor. 7:33); he will give her every honor (1 Peter 3:7). For a definition of the type of love here enjoined (*agapan*) see on Matt. 5:43.

Gave himself. The supreme test of love is whether it is prepared to forgo happiness in order that the other might have it. In this respect the husband is to imitate Christ, giving up personal pleasures and comforts to obtain his wife’s happiness, standing by her side in the hour of sickness. Christ gave Himself for the church because she was in desperate need; He did it to save her. Likewise the husband will give himself for the salvation of his wife, ministering to her spiritual needs, and she to his, in a spirit of mutual love.

26. Sanctify and cleanse. Christ took away the filthy garments and gave, instead, the robe of His perfect righteousness (see on Matt. 22:11).

Washing. Gr. *loutron*, “bath,” “bathing place,” or “bathing.” The word occurs elsewhere in the NT only in Titus 3:5, where it appears in the expression “washing of regeneration.” Since the context is that of marriage, there is probably an allusion to the ancient custom of the purifying bath of the bride before marriage. Or the reference may be to baptism. In either case, the idea is that Christ has purified the church. Christ gave Himself for the church that she might become a pure church, and so abide with Him forever.

By. Or, “in,” meaning “by means of.”

Word. Gr. *rhēma*, “utterance,” “saying,” “statement.” Compare the use of the term in Rom. 10:8, 17; 2 Cor. 13:1; Heb. 1:3. Many commentators see a reference here to the formula used in connection with the rite of baptism (see Matt. 28:19). Others see a reference to the utterance of faith by the new convert (Rom. 10:8–10). Still others apply *rhēma* to the gospel or to the word of faith preached prior to baptism.

27. Present. Gr. *paristēmi*, “to place beside,” “to present.” Compare the use of the word in 2 Cor. 4:14; Col. 1:22, 28; Jude 24. Christ presents the church, the bride, to Himself. Christ came down to save His bride. Later as Bridegroom He receives her into the glorious home He has prepared (cf. John 14:2, 3).

Glorious. Gr. *endoxos*, “in honor,” “in splendor.” An interesting comparison is found in Ps. 45:10–14. This passage concerning Christ and the church throws into bold relief the splendor and beauty of the marital relationship, as Paul envisages it. The union of Christ and the church is no less a reality than the union of man and wife.

Spot, or wrinkle. This condition will not be until Christ comes again. The tares and the wheat will grow together until the harvest (Matt. 13:30). Then the tares will be removed and the church will be pure.

Holy. Gr. *hagios* (see on Rom. 1:7). The apostle has perhaps gone beyond the comparison with marriage in his discussion of the ultimate condition to which the church is to attain.

Without blemish. Compare Eph. 1:4; Col. 1:22; Heb. 9:14.

28. So. Paul has briefly digressed to speak of the glorified church, and he now returns to his subject and stresses the chief element in which earthly marriage is like the union of Christ and the church—that of unfailing, self-sacrificing love. “So” refers to the description of the love of Christ in vs. 25–27.

As their own bodies. Not because self-love is the highest ideal, but because husband and wife are one body, one flesh (cf. Gen. 2:24; Eph. 5:31). As a man protects his own body from danger and discomfort, so he will give his wife equal consideration. Paul is stressing the essential unity that should prevail.

Loveth himself. This is because their interest are the same, their ideals correspond, their spiritual goals are identical. When he promotes her welfare he is promoting his own, not only because they are closely bound together, but because she imparts to him the happiness he brings to her. Kindness begets kindness.

29. No man ever. Paul is stating a general truth. A man must be mentally unbalanced to hate his flesh.

Nourisheth. Gr. *ektrophō*, “to nurture,” “to bring up.” In ch. 6:4 the word is used for the bringing up of children. A good husband is sometimes spoken of as being “a good provider” for his family.

Cherisheth. Gr. *thalpō*, primarily “to warm,” hence, “to foster,” “to cherish.” The word appears elsewhere in the NT only in 1 Thess. 2:7, where Paul asserts that he cared for the Thessalonians “as a nurse cherisheth her children.”

30. Members. Gr. *melē*, “limbs,” or “parts [of the body]” (see on 1 Cor. 12:12; cf. Rom. 12:4, 5; Cor. 6:15; Eph. 4:25). There is an intimate union between Christ and His body.

Flesh, ... bones. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of these last two phrases. The expression suggests the declaration of Gen. 2:23, “This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh,” the words in which Adam described the closeness of the relationship between himself and Eve. These words, if included, are figuratively employed. As the life that sustains the vine flows to the branches and becomes the source of their life (John 15:1–8), so the believer gathers all his spiritual life and graces from

Christ. He can do nothing of himself, and he would perish spiritually—and eventually physically—if separated from his Lord.

31. For this cause. A quotation from Gen. 2:24 (see on Gen. 2:24; Matt. 19:5).

One flesh. Male and female are complementary, making together, as it were, one perfect being. Any serious contemplation of this thought would prohibit the frivolous manner in which many marriages are contracted, sometimes with the deliberate intention of divorce if they should not work out. God intended that marriage should be a lifelong association, and any society that treats lightly the institution has within it the seeds of its own destruction. The family is too fundamental a unit of society to be tampered with. Christ also desires His union with His people to be everlasting (John 10:28, 29).

32. A great mystery. Rather, “this mystery is great.” For a comment on “mystery” see on Rom. 11:25. The word suggests, in NT usage, something that has been hidden, particularly a spiritual truth, but is now revealed. Paul is saying that the revealed mystery of the union of husband and wife is indeed a great and profound truth, but that he is applying it to the union of Christ and His church. While human marriage can be understood, the mystic union of Christ and believer, though a revealed truth, is still beyond our complete apprehension; we still “see through a glass, darkly” (1 Cor. 13:12).

33. Nevertheless. Paul resumes the subject he has been discussing in vs. 21–29. After the digression regarding the love Christ has shown for His church, the apostle turns to that which all should grasp, the duty of husband and wife to each other, and proceeds to make a practical personal and individual application of the truth he has been enunciating.

Every one. Paul emphasizes the idea of individual responsibility and privilege.

Love his wife. See on v. 28.

Reverence. Literally, “fear,” “respect.” Paul does not mean cringing fear; that would be out of keeping with the counsel he has been giving. This honor and respect that is urged in no way eliminates love on the part of the wife. It means that God’s natural order in the family should not be subverted, and that the special function of leadership that God has laid upon the husband should be regarded (see on v. 23). Where there is mutual love and respect, questions of domination or alienation will not arise.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1 5T 249; 9T 283

1, 2 5T 173

2 AH 114; COL 156; DA 563; GW 160; MH 361, 396; 2T 127; 7T 46

3 PP 496

4 Ev 644

5 GC 541; 5T 270

8 2T 488; 3T 199; 6T 335

9 SL 80; 3T 65

11 AA 290; MB 69; MYP 390; PK 252; TM 87; 1T 279; 2T 441; 3T 239; 5T 76, 164

14 DA 320; TM 451; 2T 71, 114; 5T 134, 367, 388

14–16GC 602

15 3T 482; 7T 104

15, 16 AA 470; ML 115

15–201T 509

16 CM 47; COL 342; CT 46; 2T 48, 301, 317, 321, 501; 5T 19, 353, 549; 6T 149, 200

17 MM 330

18 MB 31; MH 246
 18, 19 ML 90
 19 AH 510; CT 234; Ev 510, 512, 630; ML 56, 174; PP 289; 2T 417, 435
 20 ML 153
 21 3T 361; 5T 108
 22 AH 115
 22–25AH 114; 1T 307; 7T 46
 23 AH 215
 23–25AH 95
 24, 25 AH 103, 106; MH 361
 24–28MB 64
 25 AA 470; Ed 268; TM 53
 25, 26 AH 117
 25–27ML 249; 1T 339; 6T 129
 25–28MH 356
 26, 27 2T 111, 473
 27 AA 470; COL 310; GC 425, 484, 490; MH 130; MYP 105, 144; PK 489; 1T 163, 533;
 2T 453; 5T 214, 592; 6T 261; 8T 171
 2

CHAPTER 6

1 *The duty of children towards their parents, 5 of servants towards their masters. 10 Our life is a warfare, 12 not only against flesh and blood, but also spiritual enemies. 13 The complete armour of a Christian, 18 and how it ought to be used. 21 Tychicus is commended.*

1. Children. The apostle makes a natural transition from husbands and wives to children (see Col. 3:20).

Obey. This is a stronger word than “submit,” which is used to express the relation of wife to husband (ch. 5:22), and indicates a different relationship. Throughout Scripture, disobedience to parents is treated as one of the greatest evils (cf. Rom. 1:30; 2 Tim. 3:2). Obedience on the part of children is reasonable and just. Of all creatures that are born, a human babe is the most helpless, and for years it is entirely dependent on the kindness and love of parents. There can be no ordered family life without the obedience of the children, for the child is not competent to judge the reason for certain courses of action. But even more important, a child who is disobedient to parents will surely be disobedient to God, for he will know nothing of those disciplines and restraints that are absolutely essential to Christian growth. The word “obedience” does not ring pleasantly in some modern ears, but those who resent it as “regimentation” must assume their share of the blame for the alarming rise of juvenile delinquency in recent years.

In the Lord. This phrase qualifies “obey” rather than “parents,” thus establishing that children, within their spiritual capacity, should obey from principle rather than from necessity. To “obey in the Lord” is to give the kind of obedience that springs from being “in Christ” (see on ch. 1:1); it may also indicate the limitations that are inherent in any

²Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (Eph 2:16). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.

human commands, even those of parents to children. Parental requests should be in harmony with the will of God (Acts 5:29). Parents must take upon themselves the responsibility for any moral misdirection of the child. The awakening conscience of the child must be respected by the parents; only thus could obedience be “in the Lord.”

Right. Or, “just.” This is the chief reason given for obedience, but it is sufficient. In the very very nature of things obedience is fitting, for God commands it, parents are entitled to it, and it is for the good of the children. In Col. 3:20 obedience is said to be “well pleasing unto the Lord.” The reign of law in human relationships is as essential as it is in the natural world; otherwise there would be anarchy and chaos. That obedience to parents in that which they lawfully require is right, is negatively evidenced in the history of families where parental control is lacking.

2. Honour. See on Ex. 20:12. The honor here spoken of is not a sentimental respect, but actual obedience. A divine comment on this principle is given in Matt. 15:4–8. Honor may be thought of as the attitude from which obedience springs, and it should be observed that this honor is due both father and mother. One is not to be placed before the other in esteem. This honor is shown in a variety of ways. It includes the little attentions that youth should show to age, confidence in the word and judgment of the parents, and loyalty to the family name and integrity.

First commandment. Not only is it natural that obedience should be given to parents, but it is God’s express will. It is the first commandment in the Decalogue to which a promise is specifically attached; indeed, it is altogether unique in that respect. The promise made in the second commandment (Ex. 20:6) is of a general nature applying to the keeping of all the commandments, but special blessing is promised upon those who obey their parents.

3. Well with thee. The fifth commandment as recorded in Deut. 5:16 may provide the basis for this statement, although Paul does not quote the promise verbatim. Children are happier when they have learned obedience to parents, and all are happier when they have learned obedience to God.

Live long. The fifth commandment has the words “that thy days may be long upon the land which the Lord thy God giveth thee,” with apparent primary application to the coming of Israel to the land of Canaan. Here Paul states the promise more generally for all people. Life is a gift from God (Acts 17:25), and long life is a blessing. A life that gains the blessing of God on this earth has promise of life everlasting.

It is well recognized that a wholesome family life, of which obedience is a part, tends to the well-being of society and of nations. Obedience to Christian parents means sobriety, industry, self-control, and all those other virtues that bring both physical and spiritual health. Paul is stating a natural law as well as announcing special blessings of God upon the obedient. The vices that shorten life will not be found in the Christian home.

4. Fathers. The term may be used generically to include both fathers and mothers. However, the first responsibility for discipline usually rests with the father; and, moreover, fathers commonly need the counsel that is to follow more than mothers do. If mothers tend to be overindulgent, fathers tend to be severe.

Provoke not. This negative advice is essential if the obedience required of the children is to rest on a moral basis. The parallel passage in Colossians gives the reason for this admonition: “Lest they be discouraged” (Col. 3:21). The present low ebb of

parental authority sometimes springs from unjust, irritating, or even brutal demands made by parents on children, particularly the unwanted ones. Too often children are considered as “disturbers of the peace” of the home, an annoyance. Another prolific cause of resentment among children is the capricious, inconsistent demands of some parents. Even if outward obedience is gained by violent means, it is at the expense of honor and respect.

Bring ... up. Gr. *ektrephō* (see on ch. 5:29).

Nurture. Gr. *paideia*, “discipline,” “instruction,” “chastening.” *Paideia* is used in Heb. 12:5–11 to describe the “chastening of the Lord” that “yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness.” Compare the use of the verb *paideuō* in 1 Cor. 11:32; 2 Cor. 6:9. The Lord’s chastening, instruction, and discipline are an indication of His love (Rev. 3:19), and so should be those of the parents.

Admonition. Gr. *nouthesia*, “to put in mind.” The word implies instruction or discipline by word, in the form of warning. *Nouthesia* occurs elsewhere in the NT only in 1 Cor. 10:11 and Titus 3:10. The related verb *noutheteō* is found in Rom. 15:14; Col. 1:28; 2 Thess. 3:15; etc. There is a place for warning in any system of education, for whatever purpose. Admonition encourages a child when he is in the right and warns him when he is in the wrong.

It has been seriously suggested by some educators that a child should be left to form his own religious ideas and convictions, since it is unfair to impose them upon him when he is unequipped to think for himself. This argument is fallacious, for it is impossible for a child to grow up without religious conceptions of some kind. If parents or guardians do not instruct their children in truth, someone else will instruct them in error. There is no neutrality in this matter.

Of the Lord. If children are to grow up in the fear of the Lord, the “nurture and admonition” given by the parents must come from the Lord and have His approval. The parent stands for God before his young child—a most sobering responsibility for father and mother.

5. Servants. Gr. *douloi*, “slaves,” “bond servants” (see on Rom. 1:1). This expression is used frequently by Paul both to describe his own relation to Christ and to give counsel concerning the slavery and servitude that existed throughout the Roman world (see 1 Cor. 7:21, 22; Col. 3:22–25; 1 Tim. 6:1, 2; Philemon; 1 Peter 2:18–25). Slavery was anciently practiced, not only by pagans, but also by Christians in the early Christian church. Nowhere in the Scriptures is this unnatural practice specifically condemned, but in both the OT and the NT principles are enunciated that would tend in time to eradicate it (see on Deut. 14:26; 1 Cor. 7:20–24; Philemon).

Be obedient. By following Paul’s instruction on their relations with their masters, the large number of Christian slaves within the empire would have a powerful influence on the upper class, who were the slaveowners. Thus, in their own way, the vast number of slaves would form a mission body whose power would be felt throughout society. Inevitably, with slave and master truly brethren, a social and religious revolution would be under way.

According to the flesh. This phrase, which also appears in Col. 3:22, differentiates between their physical servitude to their masters and their spiritual allegiance to Christ. Human slavery may imprison the body, but it never can subjugate the spirit. Paul is here

incidentally declaring the limitations of human slavery, which was able to demand the service of the body but could not command the spirit.

Fear and trembling. This is a typical Pauline phrase (cf. 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 7:15; Phil. 2:12) connoting great care and earnestness. It is used when a solemn responsibility before God is enjoined, in this case, the servants' responsibility to have every possible anxiety to please their masters. They were not released by Christianity from their obligations to their legal masters, and should have a deep sense of their duty.

Singleness. Gr. *haplotēs* (see on Rom. 12:8). The one aim should be to please Christ in the discharge of duty to the slave master. "Doubleness" of heart would mean seeking to please outwardly while avoiding proper service whenever possible. A slave might be tempted to rationalize that since his servitude was unjust, it was only proper that he should gain his rights by subterfuge if necessary. To do right because it is right is a high Christian principle.

As unto Christ. Servants were to look on the service to their masters as part of their service to Christ.

6. Eyeservice. The word thus translated occurs elsewhere only in Col. 3:22. It is quite understandable that slaves would be peculiarly susceptible to the temptation to render eyeservice to their masters, that is, service that is given only when the employer or master is watching. Regardless of the cause, such service corrupts the character of the worker. Hence the command to fidelity and integrity (cf. 2 Chron. 16:9).

Menpleasers. As opposed to Christ pleasers (see Gal. 1:10; 1 Thess. 2:3, 4). An earthly master might even be pleased with eyeservice because he does not recognize it for what it is, but the Christian is also working for One who sees infallibly the motives of the heart. It is not wrong to want to please men; indeed, it is a Christian duty to endeavor to do so; but pleasing men at all costs, often by using such means as flattery and deceit, is unworthy of any self-respecting person, Christian or not.

Servants of Christ. Or, "slaves of Christ" (see on Rom. 1:1).

Will of God. When one is doing the will of God, the most menial tasks are dignified, provided they are done "from the heart" (cf. Col. 3:23).

7. Good will. This may imply an even higher quality of service than "singleness of ... heart." The servant who takes a sincere interest in the welfare of his master and his business has already escaped the weight of his burden and is approaching the status of a freeman. Indeed, a slave, when he is called into the service of the Lord, "is the Lord's freeman" (see on 1 Cor. 7:22). Principles such as these, embedded in the gospel of Christ, eventually destroyed slavery, and, in the meantime, gave relief to Christian slaves throughout the centuries. Granted good will, almost any barrier between men can be broken down.

To the Lord. The conviction that one is led by God is a most powerful incentive to the contented life, as is the knowledge that one's efforts are accepted by God. The martyr faced the stake in this confidence, and the slave bore patiently his grievous wrongs because of it. However, the martyr's courage and the slave's patience do not make right the wrongs of the persecutor and the master. They must answer to God for their wrongs.

8. Knowing. The slave may have the assurance that his life and deeds are observed by Providence, and that the rewards that come to other men will be his also. The great spiritual certainties are the heritage of *all* believers.

Any man doeth. The good things that bring the reward are the outcome of the “good will” and consecration of the slave. See Col. 3:25 for the same truth expressed from the negative viewpoint.

Receive. Compare Matt. 25:21. Scripture is full of promises of rewards (Matt. 5:12; 16:27; Luke 6:35; Rom. 2:6–10; Heb. 10:35; Rev. 22:12; etc.).

Bond or free. Compare this phrase in 1 Cor. 12:13; Gal. 3:28; Col. 3:11. God’s grace knows no distinctions whatsoever, for “God is no respecter of persons” (Acts 10:34), nor are His judgments partial (Ps. 98:9). But the point of comfort for the slave would be not so much that all were equally servants of God, as that all receive equally from Him the rewards of the kingdom.

9. Masters. It is here clearly indicated that there were slave owners in the Christian church, converted men, who were living according to their measure of spiritual knowledge and had a sense of Christian responsibility. Such a one no doubt was Philemon (see comments on the book). In turning to the duties of masters, Paul does not hold them up to condemnation, but, as in dealing with servants, he lays down principles that would, in due course of time, remedy the evil of servitude (see on Deut. 14:26).

Do the same. This is Paul’s version of the golden rule. Masters are to have the same spirit toward servants that he has been counseling the servants to have toward masters; and no master could ever complain that Paul’s advice to servants would encourage rebellion. The apostle has insisted that servants act conscientiously and with fidelity, knowing that the eye of God was upon them; masters should do the same. The interest of their servants would be paramount in their minds, and in treating them rightly they would be serving God also (cf. on Col. 4:1). Although Paul is dealing primarily with slavery, all that he has to say may be applied also to employer-employee relations in our modern society.

Forbearing threatening. Special instruction had been given the Hebrews on the treatment of servants (Lev. 25:39–43; Deut. 15:12–14; Jer. 34:14), and even more was expected of Christians, who had a fuller revelation of God in Christ Jesus as regards human relationships. Threatening implies fear and force, whereas the way of the gospel is the way of love. Threatening is usually the beginning of cruelty and must be entirely eliminated. It is a tremendous challenge to any administrator to exercise his authority in love rather than through power and force. It does not mean that he should not expect just service, but his warnings and discipline must be exercised with self-control and Christian charity. Respect for the personalities of others is one of the first evidences of the converted life.

Your Master. Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading “the Master of both them and you.” Both, regardless of the disparity in social positions, owe allegiance to the one Master. This fact should influence masters in their treatment of servants, because certainly any injustice would be punished, and because all who have a common Lord are fellow servants.

Respect of persons. Gr. *prosōpolēpsia*, literally, “receiving of face” (see on Rom. 2:11; cf. Col. 3:25). God will not be influenced by externals, by rank or position.

10. Finally. Or, “as for the rest,” or “in respect of the rest” (cf. Phil. 3:1; 4:8; 2 Thess. 3:1). Paul is bringing his epistle to a conclusion. He has stated the theological and spiritual basis for unity of all men, and has given instruction concerning the practical outworking of this unity in church relationships, the family, and society. Now he is about

to answer the question that naturally arises as to the possibility of living up to such a profession. How can one attain to these virtues?

My brethren. Important textual evidence may be cited (cf. p. 10) for the omission of these words.

In the Lord. This theme phrase occurs in various forms about 30 times in the epistle (see on ch. 1:1). Here is the secret of victory. We abide in Him or our strength fails (John 15:4–7); His grace is sufficient for us (2 Cor. 12:9).

Power. The apostle is about to picture vast armies of evil gathered together to overwhelm the church. The contest is desperately uneven, with all the advantages on the side of the enemy, except as the church makes an alliance, through faith, with the resources of Omnipotence.

11. Put on. Paul frequently uses the figure of “putting on” (Rom. 13:12, 14; 1 Cor. 15:53, 54; 2 Cor. 5:3; Gal. 3:27; Col. 3:10; 1 Thess. 5:8). Here the idea is that of putting on a protective armor for the believer.

Whole armour. Gr. *panoplia*, “complete armor.” This word is used in the NT elsewhere only in v. 13 and in Luke 11:22. A parallel to Paul’s thought is found in Isa. 59:16, 17. Some suggest that this passage may have been the source of his imagery. Others point to his knowledge of the armor of the Roman soldier, because he was chained to one for several years. The armor is God’s because He is the one who provides each particular piece of equipment (Eph. 6:14–17). We are asked to put it on and to fight valiantly the battle. The One who forged the armor guarantees its effectiveness.

May be able. In any armor but the divine, we would not be able to “stand.”

Wiles. Gr. *methodeiai*, “crafts,” “deceits.”

The devil. Gr. *diabolos* (see on ch. 4:27). If our conflict were with man only, the need for the armor would not be so apparent, but we have to face the stratagems and cunning of the devil. The temptation of Christ reveals the subtlety of the devil’s method, one always directed toward a man’s weakest points (Matt. 4:1–11; cf. 2 Cor. 2:11; Eph. 2:2; 4:27; 1 Peter 2:11; 5:8). It is much easier to deal with open enmity than it is with deceit. The armor of God is calculated to defend against cunning attacks that would otherwise destroy the Christian warrior.

12. We wrestle. The passage reads literally, “Our fight is not against blood and flesh.”

Flesh and blood. Literally, “blood and flesh,” as also in Heb. 2:14. This is opposite to the order given in Matt. 16:17; 1 Cor. 15:50; Gal. 1:16. Paul did not mean that Christians would find no enemies among men, for the church has always suffered at the hands of wicked men. He refers to those spirits and powers that are superior to men in intelligence as well as in evil cunning, the satanic forces arrayed in open rebellion against God and against His children. The struggle between Christ and Satan is not of some local or earthly concern only; it is of cosmic significance, embracing the whole universe of God.

Principalities ... powers. See on Rom. 8:38; Eph. 1:21; cf. Eph. 3:10; Col. 2:15.

Rulers ... this world. Literally, “world rulers of the darkness of this age.” Textual evidence attests (cf. p. 10) the reading “world rulers of this darkness.” See on Rom. 8:38. Clearly Paul is referring to personal evil spirits, who exercise a degree of authority over the world. Compare the phrase “prince of this world,” describing Satan, in John 12:31; 14:30; 16:11. The personality of the devil was also clear to the revelator (Rev. 2:10; 12:10).

Spiritual wickedness. Rather, “spiritual hosts [or “elements,” or “forces”] of wickedness.”

In high places. See on ch. 1:3. Textual evidence may be cited (cf. p. 10) for the omission of this phrase.

13. Wherefore. That is, because of the nature of the conflict described in v. 12.

Take unto you. The whole armor of God is available for use, and the Christian is urged to put it on. As an army must be fully equipped before it enters the field, so the Christian must be prepared with every spiritual defense before doing battle with the devil; otherwise he will suffer certain defeat.

Whole armour. See on v. 11. A half-armed soldier may well pay for his rashness. He goes out with a false sense of security, and the enemy is sure to seek out his unprotected parts. The Christian is vulnerable at many spots, and often that characteristic he thinks is his strongest turns out, under temptation, to be his weakest. As a chain is no stronger than its weakest link, so the Christian is no stronger than his weakest element of character. In view of the variety of foes that must be met and the various weaknesses of the flesh, nothing less than the entire armor will suffice.

Evil day. Some have applied this to the last great conflict of the church with the forces of evil. The definite article lends support to this idea. Others apply the term “evil day” more generally to any day when the battle is especially fierce.

Having done all. This probably refers to having done all things by way of preparation for the conflict. Some apply it to the Christian’s having done his best during the struggle. Trust in God never deprives one of the privilege of exerting his own God-given powers to the utmost. Although it is true that the battle will never be won without God’s armor and power, neither will it be won without the cooperation of the human with the divine (see MB 142).

To stand. The Christian can rest in assurance if he has done his best, by the grace of God.

14. Stand therefore. The order in which the pieces of armor are given is probably the order in which a Roman soldier would put them on; thus there is a logical sequence of ideas. The metaphor is a magnificent climax to one of the most profound writings ever penned.

Girt about. The girdle about the loins held together the soldier’s garments that might otherwise hamper his movements.

Truth. That is, truth in the abstract, as indicated by the absence of the article in the Greek. The truth spoken of here is more than personal honesty; it is the truth of God as it is lodged in the heart, appropriated, and acted upon. Compare a similar sense of the word in 1 Cor. 5:8; 2 Cor. 7:14; 11:10; Phil. 1:18, and previously in this epistle in ch. 5:9. It was the Pharisees’ insincerity that brought down Jesus’ denunciation upon them (Matt. 23). If truth and integrity, both intellectual and moral, do not prevail in the field of religion, where will they prevail?

Breastplate. Compare Isa. 59:17; 1 Thess. 5:8. As the breastplate covers the heart of the soldier, righteousness preserves the life of the believer, and protects the “vital organs” of spiritual life.

Righteousness. Some apply this to the righteousness of Christ that covers the child of God; others, to the Christian’s personal loyalty to principle. Both are essential for

successful warfare, and Paul probably had both in mind. For a definition of righteousness see on Rom. 1:17.

15. Feet shod. The legs of the Roman soldier were covered by greaves, with sandals on the feet. This was necessary in order that his movements over rough ground should not be impeded. If he was to be able to stand the assault, he must have a sure footing.

Preparation. Or, “preparedness.” In Paul’s figure the sandals apparently served to enable the wearer to stand firm rather than to run. The picture is therefore not parallel with that in Isa. 52:7.

Gospel of peace. In Isa. 52:7 and Rom. 10:15 the “feet” and the proclamation of the “gospel of peace” are closely linked, suggesting action, the bearing of the message of good news. In this verse, however, the idea seems to be that of steadfastness in the Christian warfare. Hence the gospel, in this instance, is not so much the gospel to be proclaimed, but the gospel that has found lodgment in the heart of the Christian. It is a beautiful and encouraging thought that the warrior in the midst of spiritual conflict can stand firm in peace. He has peace with God (Rom. 5:1). Essentially, the gospel is the good news that men need not die, and that is a welcome word to the warrior facing relentless foes. He stands firm on the knowledge of Christ incarnate, crucified, risen, ascended—the heart of the gospel, and the reason for peace.

16. Above all. Rather, “in addition to all.” Important textual evidence is divided (cf. p. 10) between this and the reading “in all.”

The shield. The Roman shield was a large oblong shield made of wood covered with leather. It measured about four feet by two and a half, large enough to cover the body.

Faith. “This is the victory that overcometh the world, even our faith” (1 John 5:4). This faith is active, like the shield that is raised to catch the fiery darts; it is also passive in that it trusts in God for deliverance. Under the impact of temptation of any kind it is faith that restores confidence and enables one to carry on the battle. Moreover, “without faith it is impossible to please him” (Heb. 11:6).

Quench. Faith stops the arrows of temptation before they become sin in the soul. Temptations and all assaults of the enemy are to be encountered before they reach the vulnerable parts of the spiritual body.

Fiery darts. Ancient arrows sometimes had combustible materials, such as tow and pitch, ignited on the head of the shaft so as to set fire to whatever they hit. This is an appropriate image for the fiery temptations that come to the child of God. They may take the form of fear, discouragement, impatience, unholy thoughts, envy, anger, or any other vice. But faith in God, held aloft like a shield, catches them, snuffs out the flame, and makes them fall harmless to the ground.

The wicked. That is, the wicked one, or the evil one, the devil, who is the leader of the assaulting armies.

17. Helmet. The head needs special protection as being a most vital part, the seat of the will and the intelligence.

Salvation. In 1 Thess. 5:8 the helmet is called the hope of salvation. Salvation is past, present, and future (see on Rom. 8:24).

Sword of the Spirit. The other parts of the armor are defensive only, whereas this is both defensive and offensive.

Word. Gr. *rhēma*, indicating something uttered or spoken (see on ch. 5:26). The phrase, “word of God,” must not be limited to the words of Scripture that then existed.

When this epistle was written, the NT Scriptures were being produced. It is with the sword of the Spirit, the Word of God, that the Christian cuts his way through all circumstances.

18. *Praying always.* Literally, “praying in every season,” or “on every occasion.” Compare the injunction to “pray without ceasing” (1 Thess. 5:17). Prayer is not another weapon; rather, it is the spirit, the manner, in which the whole armor is to be worn and the battle fought. Paul is here urging it as a perpetual state of mind, a continuous attitude of communion with God (see Luke 18:1; Phil. 4:6; Heb. 4:16).

All prayer and supplication. These two words also occur together in Phil. 4:6; 1 Tim. 2:1; 5:5. In Phil. 4:6, thanksgiving as well as supplication is added to prayer. Gratitude and intercession are two most important elements in prevailing prayer.

In the Spirit. See on Rom. 8:26, 27. Even though we have the best of intentions, our prayers often reveal our poor judgment, hidden prejudices, and sheer ignorance of what is best for us. There are few who cannot look back and thank God that the Holy Spirit revised their prayers, as it were; noted the intention, and presented them to God in such a form that He could answer them. How often has time revealed to us the utter foolishness of some of our praying, and how grateful we are that we never received some things we asked for!

Watching. See on Matt. 24:42; cf. ch. 26:41.

Perseverance. Perseverance in prayer is not for the purpose, by sheer persistence, of making God change His mind, in some such fashion as a begging child finally extracts what he wants from an unwilling parent. Perseverance in prayer, however, clearly indicates on the part of the suppliant a state of mind that gives God an opportunity to do things He could not safely do for him otherwise (see on Luke 18:1–8).

For all saints. Literally, “concerning all the saints.” The saints are to be mutually supported by prayer and fellowship. It is impossible for one to be “in Christ” (see on ch. 1:1) without sharing the common sufferings of the saints and holding them up in prayer (see 1 Peter 5:9). Possibly the aging apostle, in bonds in Rome, thinks with more urgency on the communion of the saints in view of the request he is about to make Eph. 6:19).

19. *For me.* Literally, “on behalf of me.” This touching reference by the valiant warrior to his own need reveals his humility and his reliance on others for understanding and support. He needed intercessory prayer for himself, and often expressed that need (Rom. 15:30; 2 Cor. 1:11; Phil. 1:19; Col. 4:3; etc.).

Utterance. Gr. *logos*, literally, “word,” “message” (see Matt. 10:19, 20; John 1:1; 1 Cor. 12:8).

Given. Paul, like others, was dependent upon a heavenly gift (see on 1 Cor. 12:8).

Open my mouth boldly. See on ch. 3:12. Jesus “opened his mouth” and with great authority announced the principles of His kingdom (Matt. 5:2), and Paul desired a similar power. He needed boldness because his message was scorned by some and hated by others.

Mystery. This is the sixth time this expression has appeared in the epistle (chs. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; see on ch. 1:9). Paul is referring to God’s grace, which was once hidden to the Gentiles but is now being revealed (see 1 Tim. 3:16).

20. *For which.* That is, on behalf of which.

Am an ambassador. Gr. *presbeuō* (see on 2 Cor. 5:20).

In bonds. Literally, “in a chain.” The allusion undoubtedly is to the custom of chaining a prisoner by his right wrist to the left wrist of a soldier. Under certain conditions prisoners were allowed to find lodgings for themselves outside the prison. Evidently Peter slept between two soldiers, manacled to both of them (Acts 12:6), and a similar incident is reported of Paul (ch. 21:33).

Speak boldly. See on v. 19.

21. My affairs. He presumes that the readers of this epistle would be interested to know more about the conditions of his imprisonment (cf. Col. 4:7).

Tychicus. He is named also in Acts 20:4; Col. 4:7; 2 Tim. 4:12; Titus 3:12. He belonged to the province of Asia (Acts 20:4, and was probably an Ephesian. The apostle appears to have placed great reliance in him, entrusting him with most important duties to the very last. A deep affection evidently had grown between them, Tychicus being a “faithful minister” all through Paul’s last fateful yet glorious days. During his second imprisonment Paul again sent Tychicus to Ephesus (2 Tim. 4:12).

Minister. Gr. *diakonos*, “waiter,” “servant,” or “deacon”; but probably not used technically here as of a deacon (see on Eph. 3:7; cf. on Mark 9:35).

22. Sent. See p. 994; cf. on Col. 4:8.

Our affairs. In v. 21 Paul spoke of his own circumstances; here he includes his fellow Christians in Rome.

Comfort. Paul knew how concerned his readers were about his welfare, and he wished to relieve their minds of any undue anxiety as well as to show them how a Christian can bear his sufferings joyfully.

23. Peace. In this benediction the apostle recalls the words of his opening prayer (see on ch. 1:2).

Brethren. That is, the community of believers brought together into the “body of Christ” (ch. 4:12).

Love with faith. This is love in its widest meaning, united with faith, both coming from God. It is the Holy Spirit who pours it out in our hearts (Rom. 5:5).

God the Father ... Christ. See on Eph. 1:2; cf. 2 Tim. 1:2; Titus 1:4.

24. Grace. A characteristic signature of Paul (see 2 Cor. 13:14; Gal. 6:18; etc.).

In sincerity. Literally, “in uncorruptness” (cf. 1 Cor. 15:42). In his final words Paul directs attention to the eternal realities.

Amen. Textual evidence favors (cf. p. 10) the omission of this word. However, it is in keeping with the sentiments of both the writer and the reader.

The postscript following v. 24 appears in no early manuscript and was not a part of the original, inspired record.

ELLEN G. WHITE COMMENTS

1 AH 199; FE 101; MYP 444

1–31T 497

2 PP 308; 2T 80

4 AH 168, 183, 204, 317, 318, 321; CG 259; CT 109, 159, 196, 501; FE 67, 268; MM 180; PK 245; 2T 95, 224, 361; 3T 29, 564; 4T 627, 629; 5T 329, 425; 6T 199

6 AA 460; MYP 228; 3T 192

10 COL 47; Ev 98; PK 175; 8T 300

10, 11 TM 163

10–178T 42

10–18EW 26; 2T 515
 11 AH 232; CH 586; CM 182; EW 46, 63, 273; FE 299; GW 308; MM 93; MYP 33; 3T 325; 4T 212, 439; 5T 112, 309; 7T 190; 7T 190; 8T 298
 11, 12 GC 510; ML 309; Te 110; 6T 41; 9T 219
 11–13EW 60
 11–17MM 113
 12 AA 29, 219; CM 115; CT 424, 538; DA 352, 508; GC 208, 510; MH 131; ML 78, 308; MYP 55; PK 111, 142, 176, 489; PP 717; SL 91; SR 398; Te 110; TM 51, 162; 1T 345; 3T 240, 327; 5T 132, 143; 6T 140; 7T 213; 9T 220
 12, 13 FE 218
 12–181T 182
 13 EW 60; TM 163, 327; 4T 556
 13, 14 ML 310
 14 AA 76; ML 311; 1T 588; 4T 123; 9T 61
 14–17AA 502
 15 CM 90; Ev 114, 174, 564, 639; GW 305; ML 312; 7T 237; 8T 211, 295; 9T 48; WM 100
 16 CT 182; EW 60, 63, 73; ML 313; MYP 61; 4T 213; 5T 281, 294
 16, 17 AA 307; 1T 407
 17 FE 125; ML 61, 315; Te 276; 1T 469; 4T 441; 5T 104, 426
 18 CT 479; FE 490; 2T 321; 5T 190
 19 SL 84
 3

³Nichol, F. D. (1978). *The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary : The Holy Bible with exegetical and expository comment*. Commentary Reference Series (Eph 6:1). Washington, D.C.: Review and Herald Publishing Association.